General Assembly

Distr.: General
10 February 2016

Seventieth session
Agenda item 72 (*b*)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 17 December 2015

[*on the report of the Third Committee A/70/489/Add.2*)]

70/159. Globalization and its impact on the full enjoyment of all human rights

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and expressing, in particular, the need to achieve international cooperation in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction,

Recalling the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,[1] as well as the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights on 25 June 1993,[2] the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance on 8 September 2001,[3] the outcome document of the Durban Review Conference, adopted on 24 April 2009,[4] and the political declaration of the high-level meeting of the General Assembly to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, entitled "United against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance", of 22 September 2011,[5]

Recalling also the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights[6] and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,[6]

Recalling further the Declaration on the Right to Development adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 41/128 of 4 December 1986,

Recalling the United Nations Millennium Declaration[7] and the outcome documents of the twenty-third[8] and twenty-fourth[9] special sessions of the General

[1] Resolution 217 A (III).
[2] A/CONF.157/24 (Part I), chap. III.
[3] See A/CONF.189/12 and Corr.1, chap. I.
[4] See A/CONF.211/8, chap. I.
[5] Resolution 66/3.
[6] See resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.
[7] Resolution 55/2.
[8] Resolution S-23/2, annex, and resolution S-23/3, annex.
[9] Resolution S-24/2, annex.

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Assembly, held in New York from 5 to 10 June 2000 and in Geneva from 26 June to 1 July 2000, respectively,

Recalling also its resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development",

Recalling further its resolutions 66/154 of 19 December 2011, 67/165 of 20 December 2012, 68/168 of 18 December 2013 and 69/173 of 18 December 2014,

Recalling Commission on Human Rights resolution 2005/17 of 14 April 2005 on globalization and its impact on the full enjoyment of all human rights,[10]

Recalling also Human Rights Council resolutions 21/5 of 27 September 2012[11] on the contribution of the United Nations system as a whole to the advancement of the business and human rights agenda and the dissemination and implementation of the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights: Implementing the United Nations "Protect, Respect and Remedy" Framework,[12] 26/9 of 26 June 2014[13] on the elaboration of an international legally binding instrument on transnational corporations and other business enterprises with respect to human rights and 26/22 of 27 June 2014[13] on human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises,

Recognizing that all human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated and that the international community must treat human rights globally in a fair and equal manner, on the same footing and with the same emphasis,

Realizing that globalization affects all countries differently and makes them more exposed to external developments, positive as well as negative, inter alia, in the field of human rights,

Realizing also that globalization is not merely an economic process, but that it also has social, political, environmental, cultural and legal dimensions, which have an impact on the full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms,

Emphasizing the need to fully implement the global partnership for development and enhance the momentum generated by the 2005 World Summit in order to operationalize and implement the commitments made in the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits, including the 2005 World Summit, in the economic, social and related fields, and reaffirming in particular the commitment contained in paragraphs 19 and 47 of the 2005 World Summit Outcome[14] to promote fair globalization and the development of the productive sectors in developing countries to enable them to participate more effectively in and benefit from the process of globalization,

Realizing the need to undertake a thorough, independent and comprehensive assessment of the social, environmental and cultural impact of globalization on societies,

Recognizing in each culture a dignity and value that deserve recognition, respect and preservation, convinced that, in their rich variety and diversity and in the

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[10] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2005, Supplement No. 3* and corrigenda (E/2005/23 and Corr.1 and 2), chap. II, sect. A.

[11] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 53A* (A/67/53/Add.1), chap. III.

[12] A/HRC/17/31, annex.

[13] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 53* (A/69/53), chap. V, sect. A.

[14] Resolution 60/1.

reciprocal influences that they exert on one another, all cultures form part of the common heritage belonging to all humankind, and aware of the risk that globalization poses more of a threat to cultural diversity if the developing world remains poor and marginalized,

Recognizing also that multilateral mechanisms have a unique role to play in meeting the challenges and opportunities presented by globalization,

Realizing the need to consider the challenges and opportunities linked to globalization with a view to addressing such challenges and building on possible opportunities in order to achieve the full enjoyment of all human rights,

Emphasizing the global character of the migratory phenomenon, the importance of international, regional and bilateral cooperation and the need to protect the human rights of migrants, particularly at a time when migration flows have increased in the globalized economy,

Expressing grave concern at the negative impact of international financial turmoil on social and economic development and on the full enjoyment of all human rights, particularly in the light of the continuing global financial and economic crisis, which may have an adverse impact on the ability of Member States to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and recognizing that developing countries are in a more vulnerable situation when facing such impact and that regional economic cooperation and development strategies and programmes can play a role in mitigating such impact,

Expressing deep concern at the negative impact of the continuing global food and energy crises and climate change challenges on social and economic development and on the full enjoyment of all human rights for all,

Recognizing that globalization should be guided by the fundamental principles that underpin the corpus of human rights, such as equity, participation, accountability, non-discrimination, transparency, inclusivity and equality at both the national and the international levels, respect for diversity, tolerance and international cooperation and solidarity,

Emphasizing that the existence of widespread extreme poverty inhibits the full realization and effective enjoyment of human rights and that its immediate alleviation and eventual elimination must remain a high priority for the international community,

Acknowledging that there is greater acceptance that the increasing debt burden faced by the most indebted developing countries is unsustainable and constitutes one of the principal obstacles to achieving sustainable development and poverty eradication and that, for many developing countries, excessive debt servicing has severely constrained their capacity to promote social development and to provide basic services to realize economic, social and cultural rights,

Strongly reiterating the determination to ensure the timely and full realization of the sustainable development goals and objectives agreed at the major United Nations conferences and summits, including those agreed at the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 sustainable development agenda, which aim to galvanize efforts towards poverty eradication,

Gravely concerned at the inadequacy of measures to narrow the widening gap between the developed and the developing countries, and within countries, which has contributed to, inter alia, deepening poverty and has adversely affected the full enjoyment of all human rights, in particular in developing countries,

Emphasizing that transnational corporations and other business enterprises have a responsibility to respect all human rights,

Emphasizing also that human beings strive for a world that is respectful of human rights and cultural diversity and that, in this regard, they work to ensure that all activities, including those affected by globalization, are consistent with those aims,

1. *Welcomes* the adoption by the Heads of State and Government and High Representatives, meeting at United Nations Headquarters in New York from 25 to 27 September 2015, of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;[15]

2. *Recognizes* that, while globalization, through its impact on, inter alia, the role of the State, may affect human rights, the promotion and protection of all human rights is first and foremost the responsibility of the State;

3. *Emphasizes* that development should be at the centre of the international economic agenda and that coherence between national development strategies and international obligations and commitments is imperative for an enabling environment for development and an inclusive and equitable globalization;

4. *Reaffirms* that narrowing the gap between rich and poor, both within and between countries, is an explicit goal at the national and international levels, as part of the effort to create an enabling environment for the full enjoyment of all human rights;

5. *Also reaffirms* the commitment to create an environment at both the national and the global levels that is conducive to development and to the eradication of poverty by, inter alia, promoting good governance within each country and at the international level, eliminating protectionism, enhancing transparency in the financial, monetary and trading systems and committing to an open, equitable, rules-based, predictable and non-discriminatory multilateral trading and financial system;

6. *Recognizes* the impacts that the global financial and economic crisis is still having on the ability of countries, particularly developing countries, to mobilize resources for development and to address the impact of this crisis, and in this context calls upon all States and the international community to alleviate, in an inclusive and development-oriented manner, any negative impacts of this crisis on the realization and the effective enjoyment of all human rights;

7. *Also recognizes* that, while globalization offers great opportunities, the fact that its benefits are very unevenly shared and its costs unevenly distributed represents an aspect of the process that affects the full enjoyment of all human rights, in particular in developing countries;

8. *Welcomes* the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on globalization and its impact on the full enjoyment of human rights,[16] which focuses on the liberalization of agricultural trade and its impact on the realization of the right to development, including the right to food, and takes note of the conclusions and recommendations contained therein;

9. *Reaffirms* the international commitment to eliminating hunger and to securing food for all, today and tomorrow, and reiterates that the relevant United Nations organizations should be assured the resources needed to expand and enhance

[15] Resolution 70/1.

[16] E/CN.4/2002/54.

their food assistance and support social safety net programmes designed to address hunger and malnutrition, when appropriate, through the use of local or regional purchase;

10. *Calls upon* Member States, relevant agencies of the United Nations system, intergovernmental organizations and civil society to promote inclusive, equitable and environmentally sustainable economic growth for managing globalization so that poverty is systematically reduced and the international development targets are achieved;

11. *Recognizes* that the responsible operations of transnational corporations and other business enterprises can contribute to the promotion, protection and fulfilment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, in particular economic, social and cultural rights;

12. *Also recognizes* that only through broad and sustained efforts, including policies and measures at the global level to create a shared future based upon our common humanity in all its diversity, can globalization be made fully inclusive and equitable and have a human face, thus contributing to the full enjoyment of all human rights;

13. *Underlines* the urgent need to establish an equitable, transparent and democratic international system to strengthen and broaden the participation of developing countries in international economic decision-making and norm-setting;

14. *Affirms* that globalization is a complex process of structural transformation, with numerous interdisciplinary aspects, which has an impact on the enjoyment of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development;

15. *Also affirms* that the international community should strive to respond to the challenges and opportunities posed by globalization in a manner that promotes and protects human rights while ensuring respect for the cultural diversity of all;

16. *Underlines*, therefore, the need to continue to analyse the consequences of globalization for the full enjoyment of all human rights;

17. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General,[17] and requests him to continue to seek further the views of Member States and relevant agencies of the United Nations system and to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-first session a substantive report on the subject based on those views, including recommendations on ways to address the impact of globalization on the full enjoyment of all human rights.

80th plenary meeting
17 December 2015

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[17] A/70/154.

United Nations A/RES/70/160

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Distr.: General
10 February 2016

Seventieth session
Agenda item 72 (*b*)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 17 December 2015

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/70/489/Add.2)*]

70/160. International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming its resolution 61/177 of 20 December 2006, by which it adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance,

Recalling its resolution 47/133 of 18 December 1992, by which it adopted the Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance as a body of principles for all States,

Recalling also all its other resolutions on the matter, including resolution 69/169 of 18 December 2014, as well as relevant resolutions adopted by the Human Rights Council, including resolution 27/1 of 25 September 2014,[1]

Recalling further its resolution 68/165 of 18 December 2013 on the right to the truth, as well as Human Rights Council resolution 27/3 of 25 September 2014 on the Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-recurrence,[1]

Recalling its resolution 68/268 of 9 April 2014 on strengthening and enhancing the effective functioning of the human rights treaty body system,

Recalling also that no one shall be subjected to enforced disappearance,

Recalling further that no exceptional circumstance whatsoever may be invoked as a justification for enforced disappearance,

Recalling that no one shall be held in secret detention,

Deeply concerned, in particular, by the increase in enforced or involuntary disappearances in various regions of the world, including arrest, detention and abduction, when these are part of or amount to enforced disappearances, and by the growing number of reports concerning harassment, ill-treatment and intimidation of witnesses of disappearances or relatives of persons who have disappeared,

[1] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 53A* and corrigenda (A/69/53/Add.1 and Corr.1 and 2), chap. IV, sect. A.

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Recalling that the Convention sets out the right of victims to know the truth regarding the circumstances of the enforced disappearance, the progress and results of the investigation and the fate of the disappeared person, and sets forth State party obligations to take appropriate measures in this regard,

Recalling also that the Convention defines the victim of enforced disappearance as the disappeared person and any individual who has suffered harm as the direct result of an enforced disappearance,

Acknowledging that the widespread or systematic practice of enforced disappearance is recognized in the Convention as a crime against humanity, as defined in applicable international law,

Stressing the importance of the work of the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances,

Acknowledging the valuable work of the International Committee of the Red Cross in promoting compliance with international humanitarian law in this field,

1. *Welcomes* the fifth anniversary of the entry into force of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance;[2]

2. *Recognizes* the importance of the Convention, the ratification and the implementation of which will be a significant contribution to ending impunity and to promoting and protecting all human rights for all;

3. *Welcomes* the fact that 95 States have signed the Convention and 51 have ratified or acceded to it, and calls upon States that have not yet done so to consider signing, ratifying or acceding to the Convention as a matter of priority, as well as to consider the option provided for in articles 31 and 32 of the Convention regarding the Committee on Enforced Disappearances;

4. *Also welcomes* the report of the Secretary-General;[3]

5. *Requests* the Secretary-General and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to increase their intensive efforts to assist States in becoming parties to the Convention, including by supporting the actions of States to ratify the Convention, providing technical and capacity-building assistance to States and civil society and raising awareness about the Convention, with a view to achieving universal adherence;

6. *Requests* United Nations agencies and organizations, and invites intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, to continue to make efforts to disseminate information on the Convention, to promote understanding of it and to assist States parties in implementing their obligations under this instrument;

7. *Welcomes* the work achieved by the Committee, and encourages all States parties to the Convention to submit their reports, to support and promote the work of the Committee and to implement its recommendations;

8. *Recognizes* the importance of the Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance[4] as a body of principles for all States designed

[2] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2716, No. 48088.

[3] A/70/261.

[4] Resolution 47/133.

to punish enforced disappearances, to prevent their commission and to help victims of such acts and their families to seek fair, prompt and adequate reparation;

9. *Welcomes* the cooperation established between the Working Group and the Committee, within the framework of their respective mandates, and encourages further cooperation in the future;

10. *Takes note with interest* of all the general comments of the Working Group, including the most recent comments on children[5] and women[6] affected by enforced disappearances, and recognizes in this regard that enforced disappearances have special consequences for women and vulnerable groups, especially children, as they most often bear the serious economic hardships that usually accompany such disappearances and, when subjected to enforced disappearances themselves, may become particularly vulnerable to sexual and other forms of violence;

11. *Welcomes* the fact that the Committee held its annual meeting with the Working Group, as an opportunity to take stock of the activities of the two parallel organs, which are complementary and reinforce each other within the framework of their respective mandates;

12. *Decides* to devote one high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly, within existing resources, at its seventy-first session to the commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Convention, and requests the President of the General Assembly to conduct consultations with Member States in order to determine the modalities for that meeting;

13. *Invites* the Chair of the Committee and the Chair of the Working Group to address and engage in an interactive dialogue with the General Assembly at its seventy-first and seventy-second sessions under the item entitled "Promotion and protection of human rights";

14. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-first and seventy-second sessions a report on the status of the Convention and the implementation of the present resolution;

15. *Decides* to give its full consideration to the subject matter at its seventy-second session.

80th plenary meeting
17 December 2015

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[5] A/HRC/WGEID/98/1 and Corr.1.

[6] A/HRC/WGEID/98/2.

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Seventieth session
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[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/70/489/Add.2)*]

70/161. Human rights defenders in the context of the Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms

The General Assembly,

Guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations,

Guided also by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,[1] the International Covenants on Human Rights[2] and other relevant instruments,

Recalling its resolution 53/144 of 9 December 1998, by which it adopted by consensus the Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms,

Recalling also all other previous resolutions on this subject, including its resolutions 66/164 of 19 December 2011 and 68/181 of 18 December 2013 and Human Rights Council resolutions 22/6 of 21 March 2013[3] and 25/18 of 28 March 2014,[4]

Reaffirming the importance of the Declaration and its implementation, and that promoting respect and support for the activities of human rights defenders is essential to the overall enjoyment of human rights,

Welcoming the steps taken by some States to promote and give full effect to the Declaration, as well as by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and some regional organizations in making the Declaration available and known to all stakeholders at the national and local levels in their respective languages, and underlining the need to promote and give effect to the Declaration, including through its translation into the various languages and its further dissemination with a view to its implementation in all regions,

Emphasizing the important role that individuals and civil society institutions, including non-governmental organizations, groups and national human rights

[1] Resolution 217 A (III).
[2] Resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.
[3] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 53* (A/68/53), chap. IV, sect. A.
[4] Ibid., *Sixty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 53* (A/69/53), chap. IV, sect. A.

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institutions, play at the local, national, regional and international levels in the promotion and protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all,

Recognizing the substantial role that human rights defenders can play in supporting efforts to strengthen conflict prevention, peace and development through dialogue, openness, participation and justice, including by monitoring, reporting on and contributing to the promotion and protection of human rights,

Recognizing also the vital work of human rights defenders in promoting, protecting and advocating the realization of economic, social and cultural rights, and concerned that threats and attacks against human rights defenders, and hindrance of their work, have a negative impact on the realization of these rights, including as they relate to environmental and land issues as well as development,

Mindful that domestic law and administrative provisions and their application should not hinder, but enable the work of human rights defenders, including by avoiding any criminalization or stigmatization of the important activities and legitimate role of human rights defenders and the communities of which they are a part or on whose behalf they work, and by avoiding impediments, obstructions, restrictions or selective enforcement thereof contrary to the obligations and commitments of States under international human rights law,

Reaffirming that States have the primary responsibility and are under the obligation to protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms of all persons,

Reaffirming also that national legislation consistent with the Charter of the United Nations and other international obligations of the State in the field of human rights and fundamental freedoms is the juridical framework within which human rights defenders conduct their activities,

Gravely concerned that national security and counter-terrorism legislation as well as measures in other areas, such as laws regulating civil society organizations, are in some instances misused to target human rights defenders or hinder their work, endangering their safety in a manner contrary to international law,

Recognizing the urgent need to address, and to take concrete steps to prevent and stop, the use of legislation which hinders or limits unduly the ability of human rights defenders to exercise their work, including by reviewing and, where necessary, amending relevant legislation and its implementation in order to ensure compliance with the obligations and commitments of States under international human rights law,

Gravely concerned by the considerable and increasing number of allegations and communications of a serious nature received by special procedures of the Human Rights Council on the risks faced by human rights defenders, including women human rights defenders, and the prevalence of impunity for violations and abuses against them in many countries, where they face threats, harassment and attacks and suffer insecurity, including through restrictions on the rights to freedom of opinion, expression, association or peaceful assembly, abuse of criminal or civil proceedings, or acts of intimidation and reprisal intended to prevent their cooperation with the United Nations and other international bodies in the field of human rights,

Gravely concerned also about incidents of human rights defenders being subjected to attacks, threats and other abuses by non-State actors, and underlining the need for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all persons, including human rights defenders, to be respected and protected,

Welcoming the steps taken by some States, including in follow-up to relevant resolutions, the universal periodic review under the Human Rights Council, special

procedures, treaty bodies and regional human rights mechanisms, towards the improvement of dialogue between authorities and civil society and towards the adoption of national policies and legislation that serve to create a safe and enabling environment and to protect human rights defenders, in particular from being prosecuted, in contravention of the obligations and commitments of States under international human rights law, for peaceful activities, and against threats, harassment, intimidation, duress, arbitrary detention or arrest, enforced disappearance, violence and attacks by State and non-State actors,

Recognizing that dissenting views, including views on government and corporate policies related to or with an impact on human rights, may be expressed peacefully and communicated freely in society, online and offline, in accordance with the obligations and commitments of States under international human rights law, and thereby emphasizing the importance of respecting all human rights of all, and stressing in this regard the importance of independent voices of civic activity, human rights education and independent, impartial and competent national judicial systems,

Stressing in particular that information and communications technologies are important tools for the promotion of human rights and reporting on human rights violations and abuses, and concerned that such technologies are increasingly being used to monitor and hamper the work of human rights defenders,

Strongly reaffirming that everyone has the right, individually and in association with others, to promote and strive for the protection and realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms at the national and international levels, as laid out in the Declaration,

1. *Stresses* that the right of everyone to promote and strive for the protection and realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms without retaliation or fear thereof is an essential element in building and maintaining sustainable, open and democratic societies;

2. *Calls upon* all States to take all measures necessary to ensure the rights and safety of human rights defenders who exercise the rights to freedom of opinion, expression, peaceful assembly and association, which are essential for the promotion and protection of human rights;

3. *Welcomes* the work and takes note of the report of the Special Rapporteur of the Human Rights Council on the situation of human rights defenders;[5]

4. *Urges* States to acknowledge through public statements, policies or laws the important and legitimate role of individuals, groups and organs of society, including human rights defenders, in the promotion of human rights, democracy and the rule of law, as essential components of ensuring their recognition and protection, including by condemning publicly all cases of violence and discrimination against human rights defenders, including women human rights defenders, underlining that such practices can never be justified;

5. *Strongly condemns* the violence against and the targeting, criminalization, intimidation, torture, disappearance and killing of any individuals, including human rights defenders, for reporting and seeking information on human rights violations and abuses, and stresses the need to combat impunity by ensuring that those responsible for violations and abuses against human rights defenders, including against their legal representatives, associates and family members, are promptly brought to justice through impartial investigations;

[5] A/70/217.

6. *Condemns* all acts of intimidation and reprisal by State and non-State actors against individuals, groups and organs of society, including against human rights defenders and their legal representatives, associates and family members, who seek to cooperate, are cooperating or have cooperated with subregional, regional and international bodies, including the United Nations, its representatives and mechanisms, in the field of human rights;

7. *Urges* non-State actors to respect and promote the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all persons and to refrain from undermining the capacity of human rights defenders, including women human rights defenders, to operate free from hindrance and insecurity;

8. *Calls upon* States to take concrete steps to prevent and put an end to the arbitrary arrest and detention of human rights defenders, and in this regard strongly urges the release of persons detained or imprisoned, in violation of the obligations and commitments of States under international human rights law, for exercising their human rights and fundamental freedoms, such as the rights to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association, including in relation to cooperation with the United Nations or other international mechanisms in the area of human rights;

9. *Reaffirms* the urgent need to respect, protect, facilitate and promote the work of those promoting and defending economic, social and cultural rights, as a vital factor contributing towards the realization of those rights, including as they relate to environmental and land issues as well as development;

10. *Calls upon* all States to create and maintain a safe and enabling environment for the realization of human rights and specifically to ensure that:

(*a*) The promotion and protection of human rights are not criminalized or met with limitations in contravention of the obligations and commitments of States under international human rights law;

(*b*) Human rights defenders, their family members, associates and legal representatives are not prevented from enjoying universal human rights owing to their work, including by ensuring that all legal provisions, administrative measures and policies affecting them, including those aimed at preserving public safety, public order and public morals, are minimally restrictive, clearly defined, determinable, non-retroactive and compatible with the obligations and commitments of States under international human rights law;

(*c*) Measures to combat terrorism and preserve national security are in compliance with their obligations and commitments under international law, in particular under international human rights law, and do not jeopardize the safety or arbitrarily hinder the work of individuals, groups and organs of society engaged in promoting and defending human rights, while clearly identifying which offences qualify as terrorist acts by defining transparent and foreseeable criteria;

(*d*) Where legislation and procedures governing the registration and funding of civil society organizations exist, they are transparent, non-discriminatory, expeditious, inexpensive, allow for the possibility to appeal and avoid requiring re-registration, with national legislation being in compliance with international human rights law;

(*e*) Procedural safeguards, including in criminal cases, are in place in accordance with international human rights law in order to eliminate unreliable evidence, unwarranted investigations and procedural delays, thereby effectively contributing to the expeditious closing of unsubstantiated cases, including against

human rights defenders, and individuals are afforded the opportunity to lodge complaints directly with the appropriate authority, and respecting, inter alia, the right to be informed promptly and in detail of charges, the right to the presumption of innocence, the right to a fair and public hearing, the right to choose and communicate with counsel in confidence, the right to present witnesses and evidence and cross-examine prosecution witnesses and the right to appeal;

(*f*) Information, such as evidence of serious violations of human rights, held by public authorities is not unnecessarily classified or otherwise withheld from the public, and States adopt transparent, clear and expedient laws and policies that provide for the effective disclosure of information held by public authorities and a general right to request and receive such information, for which public access should be granted, except within narrow and clearly defined limitations;

(*g*) Provisions do not prevent public officials from being held accountable, and penalties for defamation are limited in order to ensure proportionality and reparation commensurate with the harm done;

(*h*) Information and communications technologies are not used in a manner that amounts to arbitrary or unlawful interference with the privacy of individuals or the intimidation of human rights defenders;

11. *Recognizes* that, in the exercise of the rights and freedoms referred to in the Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, [6] human rights defenders, acting individually and in association with others, shall be subject only to such limitations as are in accordance with applicable international obligations and are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society;

12. *Encourages* States to develop and put in place sustainable public policies or programmes that support and protect human rights defenders at all stages of their work in a comprehensive manner;

13. *Reaffirms* the utility and benefit of consultations and dialogue with human rights defenders related to public policies and programmes, including for protection purposes, and encourages States to appoint focal points or to employ other relevant mechanisms for human rights defenders within the public administration;

14. *Continues to express particular concern* about systemic and structural discrimination and violence faced by women human rights defenders of all ages, and reiterates its strong call upon States to take appropriate, robust and practical steps to protect them and to integrate a gender perspective into their efforts to create a safe and enabling environment for the defence of human rights, as called for by the General Assembly in its resolution 68/181;

15. *Expresses concern* about stigmatization and discrimination that target or affect individuals and associations defending the rights of persons belonging to minorities or espousing minority beliefs or views, or other groups vulnerable to discrimination, and calls upon States to ensure that legislation does not target the activities of individuals and associations defending the rights of persons belonging to minorities or espousing minority beliefs;

[6] Resolution 53/144, annex.

16. *Reaffirms* the right of everyone, individually and in association with others, to unhindered access to and communication with international bodies, in particular the United Nations, its representatives and mechanisms in the field of human rights, including the Human Rights Council, its special procedures, the universal periodic review mechanism and the treaty bodies, as well as regional human rights mechanisms;

17. *Takes note* of the reports of the Secretary-General on cooperation with the United Nations, its representatives and mechanisms in the field of human rights;

18. *Welcomes* the efforts made by States to investigate allegations of intimidation or reprisal and to bring perpetrators to justice, and encourages Governments to support such efforts;

19. *Strongly calls upon* all States:

(*a*) To refrain from, and ensure adequate protection from, any act of intimidation or reprisal against human rights defenders who cooperate, have cooperated or seek to cooperate with international institutions, including their family members and associates;

(*b*) To end impunity for acts of intimidation or reprisal by bringing the perpetrators to justice and by providing an effective remedy for their victims;

(*c*) To avoid legislation and practices that have the effect of undermining the right reaffirmed in paragraph 16 of the present resolution;

20. *Encourages* all relevant regional organizations to consider the situation of human rights defenders and to develop and employ appropriate and effective measures for their protection, inter alia, by addressing violations and abuses by State and non-State actors;

21. *Encourages* leaders in all sectors of society and in their respective communities, including political, military, social and religious leaders and leaders in business and the media, to express public support for the important and legitimate role of human rights defenders in society, including women human rights defenders, and in any cases of violence and discrimination against them to take a clear stance in rejection of such practices;

22. *Underscores* the responsibility of all transnational and other business enterprises to respect human rights, including the rights of human rights defenders to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association, and participation in public affairs, which are essential for the promotion and protection of human rights, including economic, social and cultural rights and the right to development, urges enterprises to identify and address any adverse human rights impacts related to their activities through meaningful consultation with potentially affected groups and other relevant stakeholders in a manner consistent with the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights: Implementing the United Nations "Protect, Respect and Remedy" Framework,[7] and underlines the importance of accountability, including of all transnational and other business enterprises, including their provision of, or cooperation in, remediation;

23. *Underlines* the value of national human rights institutions, established and operating in accordance with the Paris Principles,[8] in the continued monitoring of existing legislation and consistently informing the State about its impact on the

[7] A/HRC/17/31, annex.

[8] Resolution 48/134, annex.

activities of human rights defenders, including by making relevant and concrete recommendations;

24. *Encourages* national human rights institutions to pay due attention to the situation of human rights defenders, including through consultations with relevant stakeholders on issues such as legislation, policies and administrative measures that affect the defence of human rights, and to develop and support the documentation of violations and abuses against human rights defenders in a comprehensive manner;

25. *Encourages* the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the special procedures, within their respective mandates, to continue the efforts related to the protection of human rights defenders, as laid out in relevant resolutions, including by offering technical assistance for the consideration of States in bringing their legislation and its application into line with the obligations and commitments of States under international human rights law;

26. *Encourages* United Nations bodies, agencies and other entities, within their respective mandates and in cooperation with the Office of the High Commissioner and the Special Rapporteur, to address the situation of human rights defenders in their work in order to contribute to the effective implementation of the Declaration;

27. *Requests* all concerned United Nations agencies and organizations, within their mandates, to provide all possible assistance and support to the Special Rapporteur for the effective fulfilment of his or her mandate, including in the context of country visits and through suggestions on ways and means of ensuring the protection of human rights defenders, including women human rights defenders;

28. *Urges* States to cooperate with and assist the Special Rapporteur in the performance of his or her mandate, including by responding without undue delay to the communications transmitted to them by the Special Rapporteur, and reiterates its call upon States to give favourable consideration to the requests of the Special Rapporteur to visit their countries and to enter into a constructive dialogue with respect to the follow-up and implementation of recommendations, so as to enable the Special Rapporteur to fulfil his or her mandate even more effectively;

29. *Requests* the Special Rapporteur to continue to report annually on his or her activities to the General Assembly and the Human Rights Council, in accordance with the mandate, and invites the Special Rapporteur to take into account progress on the implementation of the present resolution in his or her reporting;

30. *Decides* to remain seized of the matter.

80th plenary meeting
17 December 2015

General Assembly

Distr.: General
10 February 2016

Seventieth session
Agenda item 72 (*b*)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 17 December 2015

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/70/489/Add.2)*]

70/162. The safety of journalists and the issue of impunity

The General Assembly,

Guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations,

Reaffirming the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,[1] and recalling relevant international human rights treaties, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights[2] and the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance,[3] as well as the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949[4] and the Additional Protocols thereto,[5]

Recalling its resolution 68/163 of 18 December 2013 on the safety of journalists and the issue of impunity, in which it proclaimed 2 November as the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists, as well as its resolution 69/185 of 18 December 2014 on the same issue,

Welcoming the latest report of the Secretary-General on the safety of journalists and the issue of impunity,[6] and recalling his previous report on this topic,[7]

Taking note with appreciation of the United Nations Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity, endorsed by the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination on 12 April 2012, in which United Nations agencies, funds and programmes were invited to work with Member States towards a free and safe environment for journalists and media workers in both conflict and non-conflict situations, with a view to strengthening peace, democracy and development worldwide,

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[1] Resolution 217 A (III).
[2] See resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.
[3] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2716, No. 48088.
[4] Ibid., vol. 75, Nos. 970–973.
[5] Ibid., vol. 1125, Nos. 17512 and 17513.
[6] A/70/290.
[7] A/69/268.

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Recalling Human Rights Council resolutions 21/12 of 27 September 2012[8] and 27/5 of 25 September 2014[9] on the safety of journalists, 26/13 of 14 July 2014 on the promotion, protection and enjoyment of human rights on the Internet[10] and 27/12 of 25 September 2014 on the World Programme for Human Rights Education,[9] as well as Security Council resolutions 1738 (2006) of 23 December 2006 and 2222 (2015) of 27 May 2015,

Taking note with appreciation of the summary report on the panel discussion of the Human Rights Council on the issue of the safety of journalists, held on 11 June 2014, submitted to the Council at its twenty-seventh session,[11] as well as the 2015 publication of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization entitled *World Trends in Freedom of Expression and Media Development*,

Taking note of all relevant reports of the special procedures of the Human Rights Council with regard to the safety of journalists, as well as the reports of the Special Rapporteurs on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression[12] and on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions,[13] submitted to the Council at its twenty-ninth session, and the interactive dialogue thereon,

Commending the role and the activities of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization with regard to the safety of journalists and the issue of impunity, and their facilitation of the commemoration of the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists, in consultation with relevant entities within the United Nations system, Governments and relevant stakeholders,

Taking note with appreciation of the report of the Office of the High Commissioner on good practices concerning the safety of journalists, submitted to the Human Rights Council at its twenty-fourth session,[14] as well as its report on the right to privacy in the digital age, submitted to the Council at its twenty-seventh session,[15]

Mindful that the right to freedom of opinion and expression is a human right guaranteed to all, in accordance with article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and that it constitutes one of the essential foundations of a democratic society and one of the basic conditions for its progress and development,

Acknowledging that journalism is continuously evolving to include input from media institutions, private individuals and a range of organizations that seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, online as well as offline, in the exercise of freedom of opinion and expression, in accordance with article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, thereby contributing to the shaping of public debate,

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[8] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 53A* (A/67/53/Add.1), chap. III.

[9] Ibid., *Sixty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 53A* and corrigenda (A/69/53/Add.1 and Corr.1 and 2), chap. IV, sect. A.

[10] Ibid., *Supplement No. 53* (A/69/53), chap. V, sect. A.

[11] A/HRC/27/35.

[12] A/HRC/29/32.

[13] A/HRC/29/37 and Add.1–7.

[14] A/HRC/24/23.

[15] A/HRC/27/37.

Recognizing the importance of freedom of expression and of free media, online as well as offline, in building inclusive and peaceful knowledge societies and democracies and in fostering intercultural dialogue, peace and good governance, as well as understanding and cooperation,

Recognizing also that the work of journalists often puts them at specific risk of intimidation, harassment and violence,

Noting the good practices of different countries aimed at the protection of journalists, as well as, inter alia, those designed for the protection of human rights defenders that can, where applicable, be relevant to the protection of journalists,

Recognizing the efforts by States to review and, where necessary, amend laws, policies and practices that limit the ability of journalists to perform their work independently and without undue interference and to bring them fully in line with their obligations under international law,

Emphasizing the role of international cooperation in support of national efforts to prevent attacks and violence against journalists and in raising the capacities of States in the field of human rights, including in preventing attacks and violence against journalists, including through the provision of technical assistance, upon the request of and in accordance with the priorities set by the States concerned,

Recognizing that the number of people whose lives are influenced by the way information is presented is significant and that journalism influences public opinion,

Bearing in mind that impunity for attacks against journalists remains one of the greatest challenges to the safety of journalists and that ensuring accountability for crimes committed against journalists is a key element in preventing future attacks,

Recalling, in this regard, that journalists, media professionals and associated personnel engaged in dangerous professional missions in areas of armed conflict shall be considered as civilians and shall be respected and protected as such, provided that they take no action adversely affecting their status as civilians,

Deeply concerned by all human rights violations and abuses committed in relation to the safety of journalists and media workers, including killing, torture, enforced disappearance, arbitrary arrest and arbitrary detention, expulsion, intimidation, harassment, threats and other forms of violence,

Expressing deep concern at the increased number of journalists and media workers who have been killed, tortured or detained in recent years as a direct result of their profession,

Expressing deep concern also at the growing threat to the safety of journalists posed by non-State actors, including terrorist groups and criminal organizations,

Acknowledging the specific risks faced by women journalists in the exercise of their work, and underlining in this context the importance of taking a gender-sensitive approach when considering measures to address the safety of journalists,

Acknowledging also the particular vulnerability of journalists to becoming targets of unlawful or arbitrary surveillance or interception of communications in violation of their rights to privacy and to freedom of expression,

1. *Condemns unequivocally* all attacks and violence against journalists and media workers, such as torture, extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances, arbitrary arrest and arbitrary detention, as well as intimidation and harassment in both conflict and non-conflict situations;

2. *Strongly condemns* the prevailing impunity for attacks and violence against journalists, and expresses grave concern that the vast majority of these crimes go unpunished, which in turn contributes to the recurrence of these crimes;

3. *Calls upon* States to implement more effectively the applicable legal framework for the protection of journalists and media workers in order to combat the pervasive impunity, including through enforcement mechanisms with the capacity to pay systematic attention to their safety;

4. *Urges* the immediate and unconditional release of journalists and media workers who have been taken as hostages or who have become victims of enforced disappearances;

5. *Calls upon* all States to pay attention to the safety of journalists covering events in which persons are exercising their rights to peaceful assembly and freedom of expression, taking into account their specific role, exposure and vulnerability;

6. *Encourages* States to take the opportunity of the proclamation of 2 November as the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists to raise awareness regarding the issue of the safety of journalists and to launch concrete initiatives in this regard;

7. *Requests* the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, in consultation with relevant entities of the United Nations system, and mindful of the provisions of the annex to Economic and Social Council resolution 1980/67 of 25 July 1980, to continue to facilitate the implementation of the International Day in collaboration with Governments and relevant stakeholders;

8. *Urges* Member States to do their utmost to prevent violence, threats and attacks against journalists and media workers, to ensure accountability through the conduct of impartial, speedy, thorough, independent and effective investigations into all alleged violence, threats and attacks against journalists and media workers falling within their jurisdiction, to bring perpetrators, including those who command, conspire to commit, aid and abet or cover up such crimes to justice, and to ensure that victims and their families have access to appropriate remedies;

9. *Calls upon* States to create and maintain, in law and in practice, a safe and enabling environment for journalists to perform their work independently and without undue interference, including by means of (*a*) legislative measures; (*b*) supporting the judiciary in considering training and awareness-raising and supporting training and awareness-raising among law enforcement officers and military personnel, as well as among journalists and civil society, regarding international human rights and humanitarian law obligations and commitments relating to the safety of journalists; (*c*) the regular monitoring and reporting of attacks against journalists; (*d*) publicly and systematically condemning violence and attacks; and (*e*) dedicating the resources necessary to investigate and prosecute such attacks and to develop and implement strategies for combating impunity for attacks and violence against journalists, including by using, where appropriate, good practices such as those identified in Human Rights Council resolution 27/5;[9]

10. *Also calls upon* States to ensure that measures to combat terrorism and preserve national security are in compliance with their obligations under international law and do not arbitrarily hinder the work and safety of journalists;

11. *Stresses* the need to ensure better cooperation and coordination at the international and regional levels, including through technical assistance and

capacity-building, with regard to helping to improve the safety of journalists at the national and local levels;

12. *Calls upon* States to cooperate with relevant United Nations entities, in particular the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, as well as international and regional human rights mechanisms, including the relevant special procedures of the Human Rights Council, and to share information on a voluntary basis on the status of investigations into attacks and violence against journalists;

13. *Invites* the relevant agencies, organizations, funds and programmes of the United Nations system to actively exchange information, including through already identified focal points, about the implementation of the United Nations Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity, in cooperation with Member States and under the overall coordination of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization;

14. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its seventy-second session and to the Human Rights Council at its thirty-seventh session on the safety of journalists and the issue of impunity.

80th plenary meeting
17 December 2015

General Assembly

Distr.: General
10 February 2016

Seventieth session
Agenda item 72 (*b*)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 17 December 2015

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/70/489/Add.2)*]

70/163. National institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights

The General Assembly,

Recalling its previous resolutions on national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights, the most recent of which was resolution 68/171 of 18 December 2013, and those of the Commission on Human Rights and the Human Rights Council concerning national institutions and their role in the promotion and protection of human rights, the most recent of which were Council resolutions 20/14 of 5 July 2012,[1] 23/17 of 13 June 2013[2] and 27/18 of 25 September 2014,[3]

Welcoming the rapidly growing interest throughout the world in the creation and strengthening of independent, pluralistic national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights,

Recalling the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles),[4]

Reaffirming the important role that such national institutions play and will continue to play in promoting and protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms, strengthening participation, in particular of civil society organizations, and promoting the rule of law and developing and enhancing public awareness of those rights and freedoms,

Recalling its resolution 69/168 of 18 December 2014 on the role of the Ombudsman, mediator institutions and other national human rights institutions in the promotion and protection of human rights,

Recognizing the important role of the United Nations, in particular the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, in assisting the development of independent and effective national human rights institutions, guided by the Paris Principles, and recognizing also in this regard the potential for strengthened and complementary cooperation among the United Nations, the

[1] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 53* and corrigendum (A/67/53 and Corr.1), chap. IV, sect. A.
[2] Ibid., *Sixty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 53* (A/68/53), chap. V, sect. A.
[3] Ibid., *Sixty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 53A* and corrigenda (A/69/53/Add.1 and Corr.1 and 2), chap. II.
[4] Resolution 48/134, annex.

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International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights and those national institutions in the promotion and protection of human rights,

Recalling the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights on 25 June 1993,[5] which reaffirmed the important and constructive role played by national human rights institutions, in particular in their advisory capacity to the competent authorities and their role in preventing and remedying human rights violations, in disseminating information on human rights and in education in human rights,

Reaffirming that all human rights are universal, indivisible, interrelated, interdependent and mutually reinforcing and that all human rights must be treated in a fair and equal manner, on the same footing and with the same emphasis,

Bearing in mind the significance of national and regional particularities and various historical, cultural and religious backgrounds, and that all States, regardless of their political, economic and cultural systems, have the duty to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms,

Recalling the programme of action adopted by national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights at their meeting held in Vienna in June 1993 during the World Conference on Human Rights, in which it was recommended that United Nations activities and programmes should be reinforced to meet the requests for assistance from States wishing to establish or strengthen their national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights,

Taking note with appreciation of the reports of the Secretary-General on national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights[6] and on the process currently utilized by the International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights to accredit national institutions in compliance with the Paris Principles,[7]

Welcoming the strengthening in all regions of regional cooperation among national human rights institutions, and noting with appreciation the continuing work of the Network of African National Human Rights Institutions, the Network of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in the Americas, the Asia-Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions and the European Network of National Human Rights Institutions,

1. *Takes note with appreciation* of the report of the Secretary-General;[8]

2. *Reaffirms* the importance of the development of effective, independent and pluralistic national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights, in accordance with the Paris Principles;[4]

3. *Recognizes* the role of independent national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights in working together with Governments to ensure full respect for human rights at the national level, including by contributing to follow-up actions, as appropriate, to the recommendations resulting from the international human rights mechanisms;

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[5] A/CONF.157/24 (Part I), chap. III.
[6] A/HRC/27/39.
[7] A/HRC/16/77.
[8] A/70/347.

4. *Welcomes* the increasingly important role of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights in supporting cooperation between their Governments and the United Nations in the promotion and protection of human rights;

5. *Underlines* the value of national human rights institutions, established and operating in accordance with the Paris Principles, in the continued monitoring of existing legislation and in consistently informing the State about the impact of such legislation on the activities of human rights defenders, including by making relevant and concrete recommendations;

6. *Recognizes* the role that national human rights institutions can play in preventing and addressing cases of reprisals as part of supporting the cooperation between their Governments and the United Nations in the promotion of human rights, including by contributing to follow-up actions, as appropriate, to recommendations made by international human rights mechanisms;

7. *Also recognizes* that, in accordance with the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action,[5] it is the right of each State to choose the framework for national institutions that is best suited to its particular needs at the national level in order to promote human rights in accordance with international human rights standards;

8. *Encourages* Member States to establish effective, independent and pluralistic national institutions or, where they already exist, to strengthen them for the promotion and protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, as outlined in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action;

9. *Welcomes* the growing number of States establishing or considering the establishment of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights, and welcomes in particular the growing number of States that have accepted recommendations to establish national institutions compliant with the Paris Principles made through the universal periodic review and, where relevant, by treaty bodies and special procedures;

10. *Encourages* national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights established by Member States to continue to play an active role in preventing and combating all violations of human rights as enumerated in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action and relevant international human rights instruments;

11. *Stresses* that national human rights institutions and their respective members and staff should not face any form of reprisal or intimidation, including political pressure, physical intimidation, harassment or unjustifiable budgetary limitations, as a result of activities undertaken in accordance with their respective mandates, including when taking up individual cases or when reporting on serious or systematic violations in their countries, and calls upon States to promptly and thoroughly investigate cases of alleged reprisal or intimidation against members or staff of national human rights institutions or against individuals who cooperate or seek to cooperate with them;

12. *Recognizes* the role played by national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights in the Human Rights Council, including its universal periodic review mechanism, in both preparation and follow-up, and the special procedures, as well as in the human rights treaty bodies, in accordance with Council

resolutions 5/1 and 5/2 of 18 June 2007[9] and Commission on Human Rights resolution 2005/74 of 20 April 2005;[10]

13. *Welcomes* the strengthening of opportunities for national human rights institutions compliant with the Paris Principles to contribute to the work of the Human Rights Council, as stipulated in the Council review outcome document annexed to Council resolution 16/21 of 25 March 2011[11] adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 65/281 of 17 June 2011, and encourages and welcomes the increasing use made by national human rights institutions of these participatory opportunities;

14. *Also welcomes* the contribution of national human rights institutions compliant with the Paris Principles to the work of the United Nations, including of the Commission on the Status of Women, the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing and the intergovernmental process of the General Assembly on strengthening and enhancing the effective functioning of the human rights treaty body system;

15. *Encourages* national human rights institutions compliant with the Paris Principles to continue to participate in and to contribute to deliberations in all relevant United Nations mechanisms and processes in accordance with their respective mandates, including the discussions on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;[12]

16. *Encourages* all relevant United Nations mechanisms and processes, in accordance with their respective mandates, including the Commission on the Status of Women, the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including the high-level political forum on sustainable development, to further enhance the participation of national human rights institutions compliant with the Paris Principles and to allow for their contribution to these United Nations mechanisms and processes, bearing in mind the relevant provisions dealing with their participation contained in General Assembly resolution 60/251 of 15 March 2006, Human Rights Council resolutions 5/1, 5/2 and 16/21 and Commission on Human Rights resolution 2005/74;

17. *Invites* the human rights treaty bodies, within their respective mandates and in accordance with the treaties establishing these mechanisms, to provide for ways to ensure the effective and enhanced participation by national human rights institutions compliant with the Paris Principles at all relevant stages of their work;

18. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to provide support to national human rights institutions compliant with the Paris Principles as they engage with relevant United Nations mechanisms and processes, with full respect for their respective mandates, and with a view to enabling their most effective contributions, in order to further the implementation of international human rights obligations and commitments;

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[9] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-second Session, Supplement No. 53* (A/62/53), chap. IV, sect. A.

[10] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2005, Supplement No. 3* and corrigenda (E/2005/23 and Corr.1 and 2), chap. II, sect. A.

[11] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 53* (A/66/53), chap. II, sect. A.

[12] Resolution 70/1.

19. *Encourages* all United Nations human rights mechanisms and relevant United Nations agencies, funds and programmes to work, within their respective mandates, with Member States and national institutions in the promotion and protection of human rights with respect to, inter alia, projects in the area of good governance and the rule of law, welcomes in this regard the efforts made by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to develop partnerships in support of national institutions, including the tripartite partnership between the United Nations Development Programme, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, and in this respect encourages all United Nations human rights mechanisms and relevant United Nations agencies, funds and programmes to enhance their interaction with national human rights institutions, including facilitating their access to relevant information and documentation;

20. *Stresses* the importance of the financial and administrative independence and stability of national human rights institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights, and notes with satisfaction the efforts of those States that have provided their national institutions with more autonomy and independence, including by giving them an investigative role or enhancing such a role, and encourages other Governments to consider taking similar steps;

21. *Urges* the Secretary-General to continue to give high priority to requests from Member States for assistance in the establishment and strengthening of national human rights institutions;

22. *Underlines* the importance of the autonomy and independence of ombudsman institutions, encourages increased cooperation between national human rights institutions and regional and international associations of ombudsmen, and also encourages ombudsman institutions to actively draw on the standards enumerated in international instruments and the Paris Principles to strengthen their independence and increase their capacity to act as national human rights protection mechanisms;

23. *Commends* the high priority given by the Office of the High Commissioner to work on national human rights institutions, encourages the High Commissioner, in view of the expanded activities relating to national institutions, to ensure that appropriate arrangements are made and budgetary resources provided to continue and further extend activities in support of national institutions, and invites Governments to contribute additional voluntary funds to that end;

24. *Welcomes* the important role played by the International Coordinating Committee, in close cooperation with the Office of the High Commissioner, in assisting Governments, when requested, in the establishment and strengthening of national human rights institutions in accordance with the Paris Principles, in assessing the conformity of national human rights institutions with the Paris Principles and in providing technical assistance to strengthen national human rights institutions, upon request, with a view to enhancing their compliance with the Paris Principles, and calls upon Member States and other stakeholders, including United Nations agencies, to follow up on the recommendations of the Subcommittee on Accreditation of the International Coordinating Committee, with a view to enabling national human rights institutions to fully comply with the Paris Principles in both law and practice;

25. *Encourages* national institutions, including ombudsman and mediator institutions, to seek accreditation status through the International Coordinating Committee;

26. *Encourages* all Member States to take appropriate steps to promote the exchange of information and experience concerning the establishment and effective operation of national human rights institutions and to support the work of the International Coordinating Committee and its regional coordinating networks in this regard, including through support for the relevant technical assistance programmes of the Office of the High Commissioner;

27. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to provide the assistance necessary for holding international and regional meetings of national institutions, including meetings of the International Coordinating Committee, in cooperation with the Office of the High Commissioner;

28. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its seventy-second session on the implementation of the present resolution.

80th plenary meeting
17 December 2015

General Assembly

Distr.: General
22 February 2016

Seventieth session
Agenda item 72 (*b*)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 17 December 2015

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/70/489/Add.2)*]

70/164. Measures to enhance the promotion and protection of the human rights and dignity of older persons

The General Assembly,

Guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations,

Recalling the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,[1] the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,[2] the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,[2] the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,[3] the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities[4] and other relevant human rights instruments,

Reaffirming the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action,[5]

Recalling its resolution 57/167 of 18 December 2002, in which it endorsed the Political Declaration[6] and the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002,[7] its resolution 58/134 of 22 December 2003, in which it took note, inter alia, of the road map for the implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action, and its resolution 60/135 of 16 December 2005 and subsequent resolutions on the follow-up to the Second World Assembly on Ageing, and recalling also Human Rights Council resolutions 21/23 of 28 September 2012[8] and 24/20 of 27 September 2013[9] on the human rights of older persons,

Noting with appreciation the work of the Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons, appointed by the Human Rights Council,

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[1] Resolution 217 A (III).

[2] See resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

[3] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1249, No. 20378.

[4] Ibid., vol. 2515, No. 44910.

[5] A/CONF.157/24 (Part I), chap. III.

[6] *Report of the Second World Assembly on Ageing, Madrid, 8–12 April 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.02.IV.4), chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

[7] Ibid., annex II.

[8] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 53A* (A/67/53/Add.1), chap. III.

[9] Ibid., *Sixty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 53A* (A/68/53/Add.1), chap. III.

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Taking note with appreciation of the report of the Secretary-General on the follow-up to the International Year of Older Persons: Second World Assembly on Ageing[10] and the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the human rights of older persons,[11]

Noting with appreciation the work of the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing,[12] and recognizing the valuable contributions of Member States, as well as relevant bodies and organizations of the United Nations system, intergovernmental and relevant non-governmental organizations, national human rights institutions and invited panellists, during the six working sessions of the Working Group,

Welcoming the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,[13] and stressing the need to ensure that no one is left behind, including older persons,

Noting the developments at the regional level towards the protection and promotion of the human rights of older persons, such as the Inter-American Convention on the Protection of Human Rights of Older Persons,

Noting also that, between 2015 and 2030, the number of persons aged 60 years or over in the world is projected to grow by 56 per cent, from 901 million to 1.4 billion,[14] and recognizing that the increase in the number of older people will be the greatest and the most rapid in the developing world,

Recognizing the essential contribution that older men and women can make to the functioning of societies and to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda,

Concerned at the multiple forms of discrimination that may affect older persons and at the high incidence of poverty among them, especially older women, persons with disabilities, persons of African descent, indigenous peoples, persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, rural persons, persons living on the streets and refugees, among other groups,

Noting that older women outnumber older men, and noting with concern that older women often face multiple forms of discrimination or can be victims of violence, resulting from their gender-based roles in society, compounded by their age or disability or on other grounds, which affects the enjoyment of their human rights,

Recognizing that, at the international level, the diversity of policies, standards and mechanisms aimed at protecting and promoting the rights of older persons may lead to a lack of consistent protection of their rights,

Recognizing also that the current approach at the international level regarding the promotion and protection of the rights and dignity of older persons may lead, on some occasions, to gaps in reporting on, and monitoring of, existing treaty obligations towards older persons,

Recognizing further that the issues related to ageing are often not sufficiently visible and that further progress needs to be made in the effective enjoyment and realization of all human rights of older persons, while acknowledging the

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[10] A/70/185.

[11] E/2012/51 and Corr.1.

[12] See A/AC.278/2015/2.

[13] Resolution 70/1.

[14] See Department of Economic and Social Affairs, *World Population Prospects: The 2015 Revision, Key Findings and Advance Tables* (ESA/P/WP.241).

importance of strengthening efforts to increase the visibility of and sensitize the population to those issues and to address ways to ensure the effective integration of older persons into society,

Noting that the various efforts made to increase cooperation and integration and the increasing awareness of and sensitivity to ageing issues since the adoption of the Madrid Plan of Action by Governments, relevant bodies of the United Nations system and civil society, including non-governmental organizations and the private sector, should be further strengthened in order to better promote full and effective participation by and opportunities for older persons in economic, social, cultural and political life,

Noting also that the situation of older persons presents a number of particular and urgent human rights challenges related to the enjoyment of their civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights that deserve in-depth analysis,

1. *Recognizes* the challenges related to the enjoyment of all human rights that older persons face in areas such as prevention of and protection against violence and abuse, social protection, food and nutrition, housing, employment, legal capacity, access to justice, health services, including physical and mental health support, and long-term and palliative care services, and that those challenges require in-depth analysis and action to better address them;

2. *Also recognizes* that the challenges faced by many older persons impede their social, economic and cultural participation and the full enjoyment of their human rights;

3. *Calls upon* all States to promote and ensure the full realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms of older persons, including by taking measures to combat age discrimination, neglect, abuse and violence, and to address issues related to social integration and adequate health care, bearing in mind the crucial importance of strengthening intergenerational partnerships and solidarity;

4. *Recognizes* that the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002,[7] remains the only international instrument exclusively devoted to older persons, and that measures towards achieving its objectives should be strengthened so as to improve its positive impact on the promotion and protection of the human rights and dignity of older persons;

5. *Also recognizes* that there is no binding international human rights instrument exclusively devoted to older persons, notes the importance of strengthening the implementation of current arrangements at the national and international levels to protect the human rights of older persons, and encourages Member States to continue discussions to explore all alternative measures to improve the protection of the human rights of older persons, and to mainstream their human rights throughout existing mechanisms, policies and programmes;

6. *Encourages* Governments to actively address, through national, regional and international efforts, issues that affect older persons and to ensure that the social integration of older persons and the promotion and protection of their human rights form an integral part of development policies at all levels;

7. *Invites* Member States to continue to share their national experiences in developing and implementing policies and programmes aimed at strengthening the promotion and protection of the human rights of older persons, including within the framework of the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing established by the General Assembly in paragraph 28 of its resolution 65/182 of 21 December 2010;

8. *Recommends* that States parties to existing international human rights instruments, where appropriate, address the situation of older persons more explicitly in their reports, and encourages treaty body monitoring mechanisms and special procedures mandate holders, in accordance with their mandates, to pay more attention to the situation of older persons in their dialogue with Member States, in their consideration of reports and in their country missions;

9. *Encourages* Member States to ensure that older persons have access to information about their rights so as to enable them to participate fully and justly in their societies and to claim full enjoyment of all human rights;

10. *Invites* relevant bodies and organizations of the United Nations system, including relevant human rights mandate holders and treaty bodies and the regional commissions, as well as intergovernmental and relevant non-governmental organizations with an interest in the matter, to continue to make contributions to the work entrusted to the Open-ended Working Group, as appropriate;

11. *Encourages* Member States to continue to contribute to the work of the Open-ended Working Group, in particular by presenting measures to enhance the promotion and protection of the human rights and dignity of older persons, such as best practices, lessons learned and possible content for a multilateral legal instrument, as appropriate, in order to enable it to fulfil its existing mandate;

12. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to provide all necessary support to the Open-ended Working Group, within existing resources, for the organization of a seventh working session, in 2016.

80th plenary meeting
17 December 2015

United Nations A/RES/70/165

General Assembly

Distr.: General
22 February 2016

Seventieth session
Agenda item 72 (*b*)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 17 December 2015

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/70/489/Add.2)*]

70/165. Protection of and assistance to internally displaced persons

The General Assembly,

Recalling that internally displaced persons are persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized State border,[1]

Recognizing that internally displaced persons are to enjoy, in full equality, the same rights and freedoms under international and domestic law as do other persons in their country,

Deeply disturbed by the alarmingly high numbers of internally displaced persons throughout the world, for reasons including violations and abuses of human rights and violations of international humanitarian law, armed conflict, persecution, violence and other reasons, including terrorism, as well as natural and human-made disasters, who receive inadequate protection and assistance, and conscious of the serious challenges that this is creating for the international community,

Recognizing that natural disasters are a cause of internal displacement, and concerned about factors, such as climate change, that are expected to exacerbate the impact of natural hazards and climate-related events,

Recognizing also that the risk of becoming displaced as a result of a natural disaster has doubled in the last four decades and that the consequences of hazards can be prevented or substantially mitigated by integrating disaster risk reduction strategies into national development policies and programmes,

Recognizing further that internally displaced persons can be exposed to increased vulnerability when their host communities are affected by natural disasters,

Conscious of the human rights, humanitarian and development dimensions, as well as the possible peacebuilding dimension, of internal displacement, including in long-term displacement situations, the often heightened vulnerability of women and children as well as older persons and persons with disabilities and the responsibilities

[1] See Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (E/CN.4/1998/53/Add.2, annex), introduction, para. 2.

Please recycle

of States and the international community to further strengthen their protection and assistance, including by respecting and protecting the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all internally displaced persons, with a view to finding durable solutions,

Emphasizing that States have the primary responsibility to provide protection and assistance to internally displaced persons within their jurisdiction, without discrimination, as well as to address the root causes of the displacement problem and support solutions in appropriate cooperation with the international community,

Reaffirming that all persons, including those who are internally displaced, have the right to freedom of movement and residence and should be protected against arbitrary displacement,

Noting the need for increased awareness by the international community of the issue of internal displacement worldwide, including the situation of millions living in protracted situations of displacement, many of them outside camp settings and in urban areas, and the urgency of providing adequate humanitarian assistance to and protection for internally displaced persons, ensuring protection from landmines and other explosive remnants of war, supporting local host communities, addressing the root causes of displacement, and finding durable solutions for internally displaced persons in their countries and addressing possible obstacles in this regard, and recognizing that durable solutions include voluntary return in safety and with dignity, as well as voluntary local integration in the areas to which persons have been displaced or voluntary settlement in another part of the country, without prejudice to the right of internally displaced persons to leave their country or to seek asylum,

Emphasizing that ensuring durable solutions for internally displaced persons, including the right of voluntary return in safety and with dignity, should be approached from a humanitarian and development perspective,

Recalling the relevant norms of international law, including international human rights law, international humanitarian law and international refugee law, and recognizing that the protection of internally displaced persons has been strengthened by identifying, reaffirming and consolidating specific standards for their protection, in particular through the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement,[2]

Recalling also the relevance of international humanitarian law, including the Geneva Conventions of 1949[3] and the Additional Protocols thereto of 1977,[4] as a vital legal framework for the protection of and assistance to civilians in armed conflict and under foreign occupation, including internally displaced persons,

Recognizing that violations of international humanitarian law can cause displacement, and recalling that displacement could be reduced if international humanitarian law was respected by all parties to armed conflict, in particular the fundamental principles of distinction, proportionality and precaution, as well as the prohibition of forced displacement of the civilian population, unless the security of the civilians involved or imperative military reasons so demand,[5]

Welcoming the increasing dissemination, promotion, application and integration into domestic laws and policies of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement when dealing with situations of internal displacement,

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[2] E/CN.4/1998/53/Add.2, annex.

[3] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, Nos. 970–973.

[4] Ibid., vol. 1125, Nos. 17512 and 17513.

[5] Ibid., vol. 1125, No. 17513, arts. 13 and 17.

Deploring practices of forced displacement and their negative consequences for the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms by large groups of populations, and recalling the relevant provisions of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court that define the deportation or forcible transfer of population as a crime against humanity and the unlawful deportation, transfer or ordering of the displacement of the civilian population as war crimes,[6]

Expressing its appreciation to those Governments and intergovernmental, regional and non-governmental organizations that have supported and facilitated the work of the Special Rapporteur of the Human Rights Council on the human rights of internally displaced persons, and of his predecessor, the former Representative of the Secretary-General on the human rights of internally displaced persons and, according to their roles and responsibilities, have helped to provide protection and assistance to internally displaced persons,

Welcoming the continuing cooperation between the Special Rapporteur and national Governments and the relevant offices and agencies of the United Nations as well as with other international and regional organizations, and encouraging further strengthening of this collaboration in order to promote better strategies for, protection of, assistance to and durable solutions for internally displaced persons,

Acknowledging with appreciation the important and independent contribution of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and other humanitarian agencies in protecting and assisting internally displaced persons, in cooperation with national Governments and relevant international bodies,

Welcoming the priorities set by the Special Rapporteur as contained in his report to the Human Rights Council at its sixteenth session[7] and the two strategic objectives of supporting Governments in developing national instruments and institutions on internal displacement and facilitating viable durable solutions for internally displaced persons, including through the engagement of development actors,

Recalling the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights on 25 June 1993,[8] regarding the need to develop global strategies to address the problem of internal displacement, and recalling also all relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council,

Recalling also its resolution 68/180 of 18 December 2013 and Human Rights Council resolution 23/8 of 13 June 2013,[9]

Reaffirming its resolution 46/182 of 19 December 1991 and the guiding principles contained in the annex thereto, other relevant General Assembly and Economic and Social Council resolutions and agreed conclusions of the Council, reaffirming also the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence in the provision of humanitarian assistance, and reaffirming further the need for all actors engaged in the provision of humanitarian assistance in situations of complex emergencies and natural disasters to promote and fully respect these principles,

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[6] Ibid., vol. 2187, No. 38544, art. 7, paras. 1 (*d*) and 2 (*d*), and art. 8, paras. 2 (*a*) (vii) and 2 (*e*) (viii).

[7] A/HRC/16/43.

[8] A/CONF.157/24 (Part I), chap. III.

[9] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 53* (A/68/53), chap. V, sect. A.

1. *Takes note with appreciation* of the report of the Special Rapporteur of the Human Rights Council on the human rights of internally displaced persons[10] and the conclusions and recommendations contained therein;

2. *Commends* the Special Rapporteur for the activities undertaken so far, for the catalytic role that he plays in raising the level of awareness about the plight of internally displaced persons and for his ongoing efforts to address their development and other specific needs, including through the mainstreaming of the human rights of internally displaced persons into all relevant parts of the United Nations system;

3. *Encourages* the Special Rapporteur, through continuous dialogue with Governments and all intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations concerned, to continue his analysis of the root causes of internal displacement and of the needs and human rights of those who are displaced, measures of prevention, including early warning, and ways to strengthen protection and assistance, as well as durable solutions for internally displaced persons, including addressing possible obstacles to the exercise of land and property rights for internally displaced persons, and, in the latter regard, to use in his activities the Framework on Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee,[11] and also encourages the Special Rapporteur to continue to advocate the needs of host communities and to promote comprehensive strategies, taking into account the primary responsibility of States for the protection of and assistance to internally displaced persons within their jurisdiction;

4. *Recognizes* the adverse effects of climate change as contributors to environmental degradation and extreme weather events, which may, in certain instances, among other factors, contribute to human displacement, and in this regard notes the global consultation of the Nansen Initiative, held in Geneva on 12 and 13 October 2015, at which, inter alia, issues relevant to internal displacement were discussed, and encourages the Special Rapporteur, in close collaboration with States and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, to continue to explore the human rights implications and dimensions of disaster-induced internal displacement, with a view to supporting Member States in their efforts to build local resilience and capacity to prevent displacement or to provide assistance and protection to those who are forced to flee;

5. *Also recognizes* that internal displacement is not only a humanitarian but also a development challenge, calls upon States to provide durable solutions and address possible obstacles in this regard, and to include the needs, vulnerabilities and capacities of internally displaced persons in their national development plans, and in this regard takes note with appreciation of the report of the Special Rapporteur to the Human Rights Council on the human rights of internally displaced persons in the context of the post-2015 development agenda;[12]

6. *Urges* all countries to integrate the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development[13] into their respective national policies and development frameworks, as appropriate, and recalls that the 2030 Agenda seeks to address the needs of the most vulnerable, including internally displaced persons;

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[10] A/70/334.

[11] A/HRC/13/21/Add.4.

[12] A/HRC/29/34.

[13] Resolution 70/1.

7. *Requests* Member States to strengthen their efforts to ensure the protection of and better assistance to internally displaced persons, in particular to address the challenges of long-term displacement, by adopting and implementing gender-responsive policies and strategies, in accordance with national and regional frameworks, while recognizing the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement[2] as an important international framework for the protection of internally displaced persons, and in this regard recognizes the central role of national and local authorities and institutions in addressing the specific needs of internally displaced persons and in finding solutions to displacement through, inter alia, continued and enhanced international support, upon request, for the capacity-building of States;

8. *Encourages* strengthened international cooperation, in particular between humanitarian and development actors, including through the provision of resources, coherent multi-year planning that addresses long-term displacement and expertise to assist affected countries, in particular developing countries, in their national efforts and policies related to assistance, protection, resilience-building and rehabilitation for internally displaced persons and host communities, as appropriate, and the integration of the human rights and needs of internally displaced persons into both rural and urban development strategies, as well as the participation of both internally displaced persons and host communities in the design and implementation of those strategies;

9. *Recognizes* that Member States have the primary responsibility to promote durable solutions for their internally displaced persons, thus contributing to their national, economic and social development processes, and encourages the international community, the United Nations system, the Special Rapporteur, relevant international and regional organizations and donor countries to continue to support international, regional and national efforts to meet the needs of internally displaced persons on the basis of solidarity, the principles of international cooperation and the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, to ensure that humanitarian assistance, early recovery and development assistance efforts are appropriately funded;

10. *Welcomes* the initiatives undertaken by regional organizations, such as the African Union, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, the Organization of American States and the Council of Europe, to address the protection, assistance and development needs of internally displaced persons and to find durable solutions for them, and encourages regional organizations to strengthen their activities and their cooperation with the Special Rapporteur;

11. *Expresses deep concern* at the threat caused by landmines, explosive remnants of war and improvised explosive devices to internally displaced persons fleeing conflict, impeding, in certain instances, their voluntary return, local integration and resettlement and the safe delivery of humanitarian assistance;

12. *Welcomes* the adoption and entry into force of the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (Kampala Convention), which builds on the Protocol on the Protection of and Assistance to Internally Displaced Persons and the Protocol on the Property Rights of Returning Persons adopted by the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region and which marks a significant step towards strengthening the national and regional normative framework for the protection of and assistance to internally displaced persons in Africa, encourages African States to sign and/or ratify the Convention, and encourages other regional mechanisms to develop their own regional normative frameworks for the protection of internally displaced persons;

13. *Calls upon* all parties to armed conflict to comply with their obligations under international humanitarian law, and international human rights law, as applicable, with a view to preventing forced displacement and promoting the protection of civilians, and calls upon Governments to take measures to respect and protect the human rights of all internally displaced persons, without distinction of any kind, in accordance with their applicable obligations under international law;

14. *Expresses particular concern* that many internally displaced children, particularly girls, lack access to education in all phases of displacement owing to attacks against schools, damaged or destroyed school buildings, insecurity, loss of documentation, language barriers and discrimination, calls upon States, in cooperation with all other relevant actors, including humanitarian and development agencies and donors, to ensure the right to a quality education, including primary and secondary education, for internally displaced children, without discrimination of any kind, as well as to support existing schools to enable them to include internally displaced persons, calls upon all parties to armed conflict to respect the civilian character of schools and other educational institutions and to refrain from undertaking actions that could adversely affect the protection of these buildings against direct attacks, and strongly condemns all attacks, as well as threats of attack, against schools, in contravention of international humanitarian law;

15. *Also expresses particular concern* about the full range of threats, violations and abuses of human rights and violations of international humanitarian law experienced by many internally displaced persons, including women and children, who are particularly vulnerable or specifically targeted especially for sexual and gender-based violence and sexual exploitation and abuse, trafficking in persons, forced recruitment and abduction, encourages the continued commitment of the Special Rapporteur to promote action to address their particular assistance and protection needs, and calls upon States, in cooperation with international agencies and other stakeholders, to provide protection and assistance to internally displaced persons who are victims of the above-mentioned violations and abuses, as well as other groups of internally displaced persons with special needs, such as severely traumatized individuals, older persons and persons with disabilities, taking into account all relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council;

16. *Emphasizes* the importance of communication and consultation with internally displaced persons and host communities by Governments and other relevant actors, in accordance with their specific mandates, during all phases of displacement, as well as the participation of internally displaced persons, where appropriate, in policies, programmes and activities pertaining to them, taking into account the primary responsibility of States for the protection of and assistance to internally displaced persons within their jurisdiction;

17. *Calls upon* States, in cooperation with international agencies and other stakeholders, to provide for and support, in particular, the full and meaningful participation of internally displaced women at all levels of decision-making processes and in all activities that have a direct impact on their lives, in all aspects of internal displacement, including the promotion and protection of human rights, the prevention of human rights violations and the design and implementation of durable solutions, peace processes, peacebuilding, transitional justice, post-conflict reconstruction and development;

18. *Notes* the importance of taking the human rights and the specific protection and assistance needs of internally displaced persons into consideration, when appropriate, in peace processes, and emphasizes that durable solutions for internally displaced persons, including through voluntary return, sustainable reintegration and

rehabilitation processes and their active participation, as appropriate, in the peace process are necessary elements of effective peacebuilding;

19. *Welcomes* the role of the Peacebuilding Commission in this regard, and continues to urge the Commission to intensify its efforts, within its mandate, in cooperation with national and transitional Governments and in consultation with the relevant United Nations entities, to incorporate the rights and the specific needs of internally displaced persons, including their voluntary return in safety and with dignity, reintegration and rehabilitation, as well as related land and property issues, when advising on or proposing country-specific peacebuilding strategies for post-conflict situations in cases under consideration;

20. *Encourages* the international community to provide technical cooperation to States affected by displacement, upon their request, including for the training of staff members of institutions in charge of registration and development of national laws and policies on internal displacement and issues related to land and property restitution and compensation;

21. *Welcomes* the fact that an increasing number of States, United Nations organizations and regional and non-governmental organizations are applying the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement as a standard, and encourages all relevant actors to make use of the Guiding Principles when dealing with situations of internal displacement;

22. *Also welcomes* the use of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement by the Special Rapporteur in his dialogue with Governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and other relevant actors, and requests him to continue his efforts to further the dissemination, promotion, application and integration into domestic laws and policies of the Guiding Principles and to provide support for efforts to promote capacity-building and the use of the Guiding Principles, as well as the development of domestic legislation and policies;

23. *Expresses its appreciation* for the fact that an increasing number of States have adopted domestic legislation and policies dealing with all stages of displacement, encourages States to continue to do so in an inclusive and non-discriminatory way, consistent with the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, including through the identification of national focal points within Governments for issues of internal displacement and the allocation of budget resources, and encourages the international community and national actors to provide financial support and cooperation to Governments, upon request, in this regard;

24. *Urges* all Governments to continue to facilitate the activities of the Special Rapporteur, in particular Governments with situations of internal displacement, and to respond favourably to requests from the Special Rapporteur for visits so as to enable him to continue and enhance dialogue with Governments in addressing situations of internal displacement, and thanks those Governments that have already done so;

25. *Invites* Governments to give serious consideration, in dialogue with the Special Rapporteur, to the recommendations and suggestions addressed to them, in accordance with his mandate, and to inform him of measures taken thereon;

26. *Calls upon* Governments to provide protection and assistance, including reintegration and development assistance, to internally displaced persons and to facilitate the efforts of the relevant United Nations agencies and humanitarian organizations in this regard by further improving the access of humanitarian personnel and the delivery of supplies and equipment to internally displaced persons and by maintaining the civilian and humanitarian character of camps and settlements for internally displaced persons, where they exist, as well as by taking the steps necessary

to ensure the safety and security of humanitarian personnel so that they may efficiently perform their task of assisting internally displaced persons;

27. *Emphasizes* the central role of the Emergency Relief Coordinator for the coordination of, protection of and assistance to internally displaced persons, inter alia, through the inter-agency cluster system, welcomes continued initiatives taken in order to ensure better protection, assistance and development strategies for internally displaced persons, as well as better coordination of activities regarding them, and emphasizes the need to strengthen the capacities of national and local authorities, United Nations organizations and other relevant actors to meet the immense humanitarian challenges of internal displacement;

28. *Encourages* all relevant United Nations organizations and humanitarian assistance, human rights and development organizations to enhance their collaboration and coordination through the Inter-Agency Standing Committee and United Nations country teams in countries with situations of internal displacement and to provide all possible assistance and support to the Special Rapporteur, and requests the continued participation of the Special Rapporteur in the work of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee and its subsidiary bodies;

29. *Encourages* Member States, humanitarian agencies, donors, development actors and other providers of development assistance to continue to work together, in close cooperation with the Special Rapporteur, to provide a more predictable response to the needs of internally displaced persons, including long-term development assistance for the implementation of durable solutions, takes note of the decision of the Policy Committee of the Secretary-General of 4 October 2011 endorsing the preliminary framework on ending displacement in the aftermath of conflict, notes the rolling out of the decision in select countries, and calls for United Nations agencies implementing the decision to cooperate closely with the Special Rapporteur in that regard and to use the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Framework on Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons in a manner that complements the decision of the Policy Committee;

30. *Notes with appreciation* the increased attention paid to the issue of internally displaced persons in humanitarian response plans, and encourages further efforts in this regard;

31. *Expresses deep concern* at the insufficient funding levels of humanitarian appeals, and in this respect urges all relevant actors to provide the relevant United Nations agencies and humanitarian organizations with sufficient and predictable resources to ensure adequate support for those who are forcibly displaced;

32. *Notes with appreciation* the increasing role of national human rights institutions in assisting internally displaced persons and in promoting and protecting their human rights;

33. *Recognizes* the need to collect reliable disaggregated data, including data disaggregated by sex, age and location, on internally displaced persons and the impact of long-term displacement on host communities in order to improve policy, programming and response to internal displacement and, in this respect, the relevance of the inter-agency Joint Internally Displaced Person Profiling Service and the global database on internally displaced persons maintained by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre;

34. *Encourages* Governments, members of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, United Nations humanitarian coordinators and country teams to ensure the provision of reliable data on internal displacement situations by collaborating with

the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, requesting the support of the Joint Internally Displaced Person Profiling Service and providing financial resources, as appropriate, in these respects;

35. *Welcomes* the call in the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030[14] to integrate post-disaster reconstruction into the economic and social sustainable development of affected areas, as well as temporary settlements where the displaced live, to promote regular disaster preparedness, response and recovery exercises with a view to ensuring rapid and effective response to disasters and related displacement and to promote transboundary cooperation to build resilience and reduce disaster risk, including displacement risk;

36. *Also welcomes* the initiative of the Secretary-General to hold the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul, Turkey, on 23 and 24 May 2016, and notes the opportunity the Summit presents, inter alia, to strengthen the partnerships between Member States and humanitarian and development actors in addressing the emergency and long-term needs of internally displaced persons;

37. *Further welcomes* the initiative to hold the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) in Quito from 17 to 20 October 2016, and notes the importance of addressing, as appropriate, the particular needs and vulnerabilities of internally displaced persons in urban settings;

38. *Encourages* Governments, United Nations agencies and other stakeholders to promote an inclusive approach to durable solutions that addresses the needs of internally displaced persons and their host communities, including the promotion of opportunities to fully harness the human potential of the displaced populations by promoting self-sufficiency through income-generating activities and sustainable livelihood opportunities;

39. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to provide the Special Rapporteur, from within existing resources, with all assistance necessary to strengthen and carry out his mandate effectively, and encourages the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, in close cooperation with the Emergency Relief Coordinator, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and all other relevant United Nations offices and agencies, to continue to support and cooperate with the Special Rapporteur;

40. *Encourages* the Special Rapporteur to continue to seek the contributions of States, relevant organizations and institutions in order to create a more stable basis for his work;

41. *Requests* the Special Rapporteur to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-first and seventy-second sessions a report on the implementation of the present resolution;

42. *Decides* to continue its consideration of the question of protection of and assistance to internally displaced persons at its seventy-second session.

80th plenary meeting
17 December 2015

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[14] Resolution 69/283, annex II.

General Assembly

Distr.: General
22 February 2016

Seventieth session
Agenda item 72 (*b*)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 17 December 2015

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/70/489/Add.2)*]

70/166. Effective promotion of the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 47/135 of 18 December 1992, by which it adopted the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities annexed to that resolution, and bearing in mind article 27 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights[1] as well as other relevant existing international and regional standards and national legislation,

Recalling also its subsequent resolutions on the effective promotion of the Declaration, as well as Human Rights Council resolutions 6/15 of 28 September 2007[2] and 19/23 of 23 March 2012,[3] by which the Council established and renewed the mandate of the Forum on Minority Issues, 16/6 of 24 March 2011[4] and 25/5 of 27 March 2014[5] on the mandate of the Independent Expert on minority issues, 18/3 of 29 September 2011 on the panel to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration[6] and 22/4 of 21 March 2013 on the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities,[7]

Affirming that the promotion and protection of the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities and dialogue between these minorities and the rest of society, as well as the constructive and inclusive development of practices and institutional arrangements to accommodate diversity within societies, contribute to political and social stability and the prevention and peaceful resolution of conflicts involving the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities,

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[1] See resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

[2] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-third Session, Supplement No. 53* (A/63/53), chap. I, sect. A.

[3] Ibid., *Sixty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 53* and corrigendum (A/67/53 and Corr.1), chap. III, sect. A.

[4] Ibid., *Sixty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 53* (A/66/53), chap. II, sect. A.

[5] Ibid., *Sixty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 53* (A/69/53), chap. IV, sect. A.

[6] Ibid., *Sixty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 53A* and corrigendum (A/66/53/Add.1 and Corr.1), chap. II.

[7] Ibid., *Sixty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 53* (A/68/53), chap. IV, sect. A.

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Welcoming the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,[8] of which the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development[9] is an integral part, recalling that the Sustainable Development Goals and targets seek to realize the human rights of all, and stressing the need for Member States to integrate the 2030 Agenda into their respective national policies and development frameworks, as appropriate, to promote the effective implementation, follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda, in order to ensure that no one is left behind,

Expressing concern at the frequency and severity of disputes and conflicts involving persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities in many countries and their often tragic consequences, and that such persons often suffer disproportionately from the effects of conflicts resulting in the violation of their human rights and are particularly vulnerable to displacement through, inter alia, population transfers, revocation of previously held identity documents, refugee flows and forced relocation,

Emphasizing the important role that national institutions can play in the promotion and protection of the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities as well as in early warning and awareness-raising measures to address problems regarding minority situations,

Emphasizing also the need for reinforced efforts to meet the goal of the full realization of the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, including by addressing economic and social conditions and marginalization, as well as to end any type of discrimination against them,

Emphasizing further the importance of recognizing and addressing multiple, aggravated and intersecting forms of discrimination against persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities and the compounded negative impact upon the enjoyment of their rights,

Emphasizing the fundamental importance of human rights education, training and learning as well as of dialogue, including intercultural and interfaith dialogue, and interaction among all relevant stakeholders and members of society on the promotion and protection of the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities as an integral part of the development of society as a whole, including the sharing of best practices such as for the promotion of mutual understanding of minority issues, managing diversity by recognizing plural identities and promoting inclusive and stable societies as well as social cohesion therein,

Acknowledging that the United Nations has an important role to play regarding the protection of the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities by, inter alia, taking due account of, and giving effect to, the Declaration,

Welcoming the publication of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights entitled *Promoting and Protecting Minority Rights: A Guide for Advocates*, which provides information on main actors working on the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities in the United Nations and in key regional organizations and which constitutes a valuable tool for advocates working on this issue worldwide,

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[8] Resolution 70/1.

[9] Resolution 69/313, annex.

Recognizing the important role played by the Special Rapporteur of the Human Rights Council on minority issues in promoting the implementation of the Declaration,

1. *Reaffirms* the obligation of States to ensure that persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities may exercise fully and effectively all human rights and fundamental freedoms without any discrimination and in full equality before the law, as proclaimed in the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities,[10] and draws attention to the relevant provisions of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action,[11] including the provisions on forms of multiple discrimination;

2. *Urges* States and the international community to promote and protect the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, as set out in the Declaration, including through the encouragement of conditions for the promotion of their identity, the provision of adequate education and the facilitation of their participation in all aspects of the political, economic, social, religious and cultural life of society and in the economic progress and development of their country, without discrimination, and to apply a gender perspective while doing so;

3. *Urges* States to take all appropriate measures, inter alia, constitutional, legislative, administrative and other measures, for the promotion and implementation of the Declaration, and appeals to States to cooperate bilaterally and multilaterally, in particular on the exchange of best practices and lessons learned, in accordance with the Declaration, in order to promote and protect the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities;

4. *Calls upon* States, with a view to enhancing the implementation of the Declaration and to ensuring the realization of the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, to take appropriate measures by, inter alia:

(*a*) Reviewing any legislation, policy or practice that has a discriminatory or disproportionately negative effect on persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities with a view to considering its amendment;

(*b*) Developing awareness-raising and training initiatives, including for public officials, judges, prosecutors and law enforcement officials, on the rights contained in the Declaration;

(*c*) Dedicating departments, sections or focal points within existing institutions or considering the establishment of specialized national institutions or agencies to address the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities;

(*d*) Undertaking initiatives to ensure that persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities are aware of and able to exercise their rights as set out in the Declaration and in other international human rights obligations and commitments;

5. *Recommends* that States and other relevant actors ensure to the fullest extent possible that the Declaration is translated into all minority languages and disseminated widely;

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[10] Resolution 47/135, annex.

[11] See A/CONF.189/12 and Corr.1, chap. I.

6. *Also recommends* that States ensure that all measures taken with a view to implementing the Declaration are, to the fullest extent possible, developed, designed, implemented and reviewed with the full, effective and equal participation of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities;

7. *Calls upon* States to give special attention to the situation and specific needs of women, children, older persons and persons with disabilities belonging to minorities while promoting and protecting the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities;

8. *Encourages* States, in their follow-up to the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, to include aspects relating to persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities in their national plans of action and, in this context, to take forms of multiple discrimination fully into account;

9. *Calls upon* States to integrate the promotion and protection of the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, as well as effective non-discrimination and equality for all, into strategies for the prevention and resolution of conflicts involving these minorities, while ensuring their full and effective participation in the design, implementation and evaluation of such strategies;

10. *Recommends* that States adopt holistic, inclusive and non-discriminatory security and policing strategies, which are important elements in preventing and combating discrimination, including racial profiling, and violence against persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, and encourages States to develop and implement these strategies in consultation with the minority communities and incorporate them into wider law enforcement and protection strategies and ensure equal and effective access to justice;

11. *Condemns* all acts of violence specifically targeting persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities;

12. *Recognizes* that women and girls belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities can be exposed to both gender-based violence and violence on the grounds of their belonging to minorities in conflict and post-conflict situations, urges States to take special measures to protect them from all forms of violence, including rape and other forms of sexual violence, and stresses the importance of their empowerment;

13. *Calls upon* States to take all appropriate measures to ensure the protection and care of children belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities who are at risk of or have experienced violence, in accordance with relevant obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child;[12]

14. *Expresses its appreciation* for the successful completion, in November 2014, of the seventh session of the Forum on Minority Issues, on the theme "Preventing and addressing violence and atrocity crimes targeted against minorities", which, through the widespread participation of stakeholders, provided an important platform for promoting dialogue on this topic and, as part of its outcome, produced recommendations to prevent violence and related crimes, to address ongoing violence and for post-violence situations,[13] and encourages States to take into consideration the relevant recommendations of the Forum;

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[12] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

[13] A/HRC/28/77.

15. *Invites* States, United Nations mechanisms, bodies, specialized agencies, funds and programmes, regional, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and national human rights institutions as well as academics and experts on minority issues to continue to participate actively in the sessions of the Forum;

16. *Reaffirms* that the universal periodic review, as well as the United Nations human rights treaty bodies, constitute important mechanisms for the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, in that regard calls upon States to effectively follow up on accepted universal periodic review recommendations related to the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, and further encourages States parties to give serious consideration to the follow-up to treaty body recommendations on the matter;

17. *Commends* the Special Rapporteur of the Human Rights Council on minority issues for the work that has been done and the important role played in raising the level of awareness of and in giving added visibility to the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, and for her guiding role in the preparations for and the work of the Forum, which contributes to efforts to improve cooperation and coordination among all United Nations mechanisms relating to the rights of persons belonging to minorities;

18. *Calls upon* all States to cooperate with and assist the Special Rapporteur in the performance of the tasks and duties mandated to her, to provide her with all the necessary information requested and to seriously consider responding promptly and favourably to the requests of the Special Rapporteur to visit their countries in order to enable her to fulfil her duties effectively;

19. *Encourages* the specialized agencies, regional organizations, national human rights institutions and non-governmental organizations to develop regular dialogue and cooperation with the mandate holder as well as to continue to contribute to the promotion and protection of the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities;

20. *Calls upon* the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to continue to promote, within his mandate, the implementation of the Declaration, and to engage in a dialogue with Governments for that purpose and regularly update and disseminate widely the United Nations Guide for Minorities;

21. *Welcomes* the inter-agency cooperation among United Nations agencies, funds and programmes on minority issues, led by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, and urges them to further increase their coordination and cooperation by, inter alia, developing policies on the promotion and protection of the rights of persons belonging to minorities, drawing also on relevant outcomes of the Forum and taking into account the work of relevant regional organizations;

22. *Takes note in particular*, in this regard, of the initiatives and activities of the United Nations network on racial discrimination and the protection of minorities, coordinated by the Office of the High Commissioner and aimed at enhancing dialogue and cooperation between relevant United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, and invites the network to continue to cooperate with the Special Rapporteur on minority issues and the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance and to consult and engage with persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities and civil society actors;

23. *Invites* the High Commissioner to continue to seek voluntary contributions to facilitate the effective participation of representatives of non-governmental organizations and persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, in particular those from developing countries, in minority-related activities organized by the United Nations, in particular the activities of its human rights bodies and of the Forum, and in doing so to give particular attention to ensuring the participation of young people and women;

24. *Welcomes*, in this regard, the decision of the Human Rights Council to establish a special fund for the participation of civil society and other relevant stakeholders in, inter alia, the Forum on Minority Issues,[14] aiming to facilitate the broadest possible participation of civil society representatives and other relevant stakeholders, with particular attention being paid to participants from least developed countries, and calls upon States to support the participation of civil society and other relevant stakeholders in the Forum and, to that end, to make voluntary contributions to the special fund;

25. *Calls upon* the Secretary-General to make available, at the request of Governments concerned, qualified expertise on minority issues, including in the context of the prevention and resolution of disputes and conflicts, to assist in resolving existing or potential situations involving minorities;

26. *Invites* the human rights treaty bodies, as well as special procedures of the Human Rights Council, to continue to give attention, within their respective mandates, to situations and rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities and, in this regard, to take into consideration relevant recommendations of the Forum;

27. *Invites* the United Nations mechanisms and bodies, the specialized agencies and regional organizations, within their respective mandates, to continue to contribute to the protection and the prevention of violations of the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, including by strengthening cooperation in respect of information-gathering and improving the information flow between themselves and with States;

28. *Encourages* regional intergovernmental bodies, within their respective regions, to promote greater attention to the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities by, inter alia, actively raising awareness of and promoting the Declaration in their work, encouraging its implementation at the national level and considering the creation of thematic and/or special mechanisms on this issue;

29. *Encourages* national human rights institutions to pay due attention to the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities by, inter alia, considering the establishment of, for instance, a department, section or focal point within their secretariats to address those rights and to play a role in stopping violence, including by monitoring situations of potential threats for persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, and by investigating and reporting, in accordance with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles)[15]

[14] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 53A* (A/68/53/Add.1), chap. IV, decision 24/118.

[15] Resolution 48/134, annex.

and their respective mandates, episodes of targeted violence against persons belonging to minorities, including, when necessary, to regional and international bodies;

30. *Encourages* civil society, including non-governmental organizations, to promote awareness of the Declaration and to review the extent to which it integrates the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities and the Declaration into its work, as well as to inform persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities about their rights;

31. *Takes note with appreciation* of the reports of the Special Rapporteur on minority issues and their special focus on preventing and addressing violence and other serious crimes against persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities[16] and on minorities and the criminal justice process;[17]

32. *Requests* the Special Rapporteur to report annually to the General Assembly and include recommendations for effective strategies for the better implementation of the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities;

33. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the effective promotion of the Declaration;[18]

34. *Takes note with appreciation* of the "Guidance note of the Secretary-General on racial discrimination and protection of minorities" providing guidance for the United Nations system on how to address racial discrimination and the protection of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities and aimed at, inter alia, integrating their rights into the work of the United Nations system at the global, regional and country levels, including through coordination mechanisms;

35. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-second session a report on the implementation of the present resolution, including information on activities undertaken by Member States, the Office of the High Commissioner, the Special Rapporteur, relevant United Nations entities and other relevant stakeholders to enhance the implementation of the Declaration and to ensure the realization of the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities;

36. *Decides* to continue consideration of the question at its seventy-second session under the item entitled "Promotion and protection of human rights".

80th plenary meeting
17 December 2015

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[16] A/69/266.
[17] A/70/212.
[18] A/70/255.

General Assembly

Distr.: General
10 February 2016

Seventieth session
Agenda item 72 (*b*)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 17 December 2015

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/70/489/Add.2)*]

70/167. Subregional Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 55/105 of 4 December 2000 concerning regional arrangements for the promotion and protection of human rights,

Recalling also its resolutions 55/34 B of 20 November 2000 and 55/233 of 23 December 2000, section III of its resolution 55/234 of 23 December 2000, its resolution 56/253 of 24 December 2001 and its resolutions 58/176 of 22 December 2003, 59/183 of 20 December 2004, 60/151 of 16 December 2005, 61/158 of 19 December 2006, 62/221 of 22 December 2007, 63/177 of 18 December 2008, 64/165 of 18 December 2009, 66/162 of 19 December 2011 and 68/174 of 18 December 2013 on the Subregional Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa,

Recalling further that the World Conference on Human Rights recommended that more resources be made available for the strengthening of regional arrangements for the promotion and protection of human rights under the programme of technical cooperation in the field of human rights of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights,[1]

Recalling the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights,[2]

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General,[3]

Noting the holding of the thirty-seventh, thirty-eighth, thirty-ninth and fortieth ministerial meetings of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa, in N'Djamena from 19 to 23 December 2013, in Malabo from 29 July to 2 August 2014, in Bujumbura from 1 to 5 December 2014 and in Luanda from 1 to 5 June 2015,

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[1] See A/CONF.157/24 (Part I), chap. III.
[2] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 36*, addendum (A/56/36/Add.1).
[3] A/70/405.

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Taking note of the decision of the High Commissioner to launch a far-reaching organizational change initiative in the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights with a view to better integrating work at Headquarters and in the field,[4]

Noting the context of deteriorating security and humanitarian conditions in the subregion, and in particular the challenges created by increasing and indiscriminate attacks and massive abuses of human rights by Boko Haram against the civilian population in many countries of the Central African subregion and in the Lake Chad Basin countries,[3]

Noting also that the effective presence of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in the countries covered and continued dialogue with the authorities have generated an increased number of requests for assistance from States,[3]

Mindful of the vastness and diversity of the needs in the field of human rights within the subregion, and taking into account the need for sufficient funding of the Centre to fully realize its significant function and crucial role in the subregion,[3]

1. *Welcomes* the activities of the Subregional Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa at Yaoundé;

2. *Notes with satisfaction* the support provided for the establishment of the Centre by the host country;

3. *Also notes with satisfaction* the increasing activities of the Centre and the improved cooperation between the Centre and the States members of the Economic Community of Central African States and Rwanda;

4. *Encourages* the Centre to take into account the requested activities, needs and demands of the countries of the subregion in the implementation of its strategic thematic priorities for the period 2014–2017;

5. *Also encourages* the Centre to strengthen its cooperation and invest in relations with subregional organizations and bodies, including the African Union, the Economic Community of Central African States, the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa and the United Nations country teams of the subregion;

6. *Encourages* the Regional Representative and Director of the Centre to continue to hold regular briefings for the ambassadors of Central African States based in Geneva and Yaoundé, as well as in countries of the subregion during visits of the Regional Representative, with the aim of exchanging information on the activities of the Centre and charting its direction;

7. *Notes* the efforts of the Secretary-General and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to ensure the full implementation of the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly[5] in order to provide sufficient funds and human resources for the missions of the Centre;

8. *Requests* the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner, taking note of the organizational change initiative in the Office of the High Commissioner, to continue to provide additional funds and human resources within the existing resources of the Office to enable the Centre to respond positively and effectively to

[4] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Seventieth Session, Supplement No. 36* (A/70/36), chap. III.

[5] Resolutions 61/158, 62/221, 63/177 and 64/165.

the growing needs in the promotion and protection of human rights and in developing a culture of democracy and the rule of law in the Central African subregion;

9. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-second session a report on the implementation of the present resolution.

80th plenary meeting
17 December 2015

General Assembly

Distr.: General
17 February 2016

Seventieth session
Agenda item 72 (*b*)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 17 December 2015

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/70/489/Add.2)*]

70/168. Strengthening the role of the United Nations in enhancing periodic and genuine elections and the promotion of democratization

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming that democracy is a universal value based on the freely expressed will of the people to determine their own political, economic, social and cultural systems and their full participation in all aspects of their lives,

Reaffirming also that, while democracies share common features, there is no single model of democracy and that democracy does not belong to any country or region, and reaffirming further the necessity of due respect for sovereignty and the right to self-determination,

Stressing that democracy, development and respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms are interdependent and mutually reinforcing,

Reaffirming that Member States are responsible for organizing, conducting and ensuring transparent, free and fair electoral processes and that Member States, in the exercise of their sovereignty, may request that international organizations provide advisory services or assistance for strengthening and developing their electoral institutions and processes, including sending preliminary missions for that purpose,

Recognizing the importance of fair, periodic and genuine elections, including in new democracies and countries undergoing democratization, in order to empower citizens to express their will and to promote successful transition to long-term sustainable democracies,

Recognizing also that Member States are responsible for ensuring transparent, free and fair elections, free of intimidation, coercion and tampering of vote counts, and that all such acts are sanctioned accordingly,

Recalling its previous resolutions on the subject, in particular resolution 68/164 of 18 December 2013,

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Recalling also all relevant Human Rights Council resolutions on the topic, including resolutions 19/11 of 22 March 2012,[1] 19/36 of 23 March 2012,[1] 22/10 of 21 March 2013[2] and 24/8 of 26 September 2013,[3]

Reaffirming that United Nations electoral assistance and support for the promotion of democratization are provided only at the specific request of the Member State concerned,

Noting with satisfaction that increasing numbers of Member States are using elections as a peaceful means of discerning the will of the people, which builds confidence in representational governance and contributes to greater national peace and stability, and which may contribute to regional peace and stability,

Recalling the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted on 10 December 1948,[4] in particular the principle that the will of the people, as expressed through periodic and genuine elections, shall be the basis of government authority, as well as the right freely to choose representatives through periodic and genuine elections, which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures,

Reaffirming the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,[5] the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,[6] the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination[7] and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities,[8] and reaffirming also that no distinctions are permitted among citizens on any grounds, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status, or on the basis of disability, in the enjoyment of the right to participate, directly or through freely chosen representatives, and to vote and to be elected in genuine periodic elections, which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret ballot, guaranteeing the free expression of the will of the electors,

Reaffirming also that the full and effective participation of women, on equal terms with men, at all levels of decision-making is essential to the achievement of equality and social inclusion, sustainable development, peace and democracy,

Stressing the importance, generally and in the context of promoting free and fair elections, of respect for the freedoms of peaceful assembly and association and expression, including the freedom to seek, receive and impart information, in accordance with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and noting in particular the fundamental importance of access to information and media freedom, including through accessible and easy to understand formats for new information and communications technologies,

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[1] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 53* and corrigendum (A/67/53 and Corr.1), chap. III, sect. A.

[2] Ibid., *Sixty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 53* (A/68/53), chap. IV, sect. A.

[3] Ibid., *Supplement No. 53A* (A/68/53/Add.1), chap. III.

[4] Resolution 217 A (III).

[5] See resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

[6] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1249, No. 20378.

[7] Ibid., vol. 660, No. 9464.

[8] Ibid., vol. 2515, No. 44910.

Noting that some countries are beginning to use online technology for balloting purposes, and reaffirming the right to privacy, according to which no one shall be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with his or her privacy, family, home or correspondence, and the right to the protection of the law against such interference, as set out in article 12 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and article 17 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and that the same rights that people have offline must also be protected online,

Recognizing the need for strengthening democratic processes, electoral institutions and national capacity-building in requesting countries, including the capacity to administer fair elections, promote voter education, the development of electoral expertise and technology and the participation of women on equal terms with men, take all appropriate measures to ensure the effective and full participation of all persons with disabilities on an equal basis with others, increase citizen participation and provide civic education, including to youth, in requesting countries in order to consolidate and regularize the achievements of previous elections and support subsequent elections,

Noting the importance of ensuring orderly, open, fair and transparent democratic processes that protect the rights to peaceful assembly, association and freedom of expression and opinion,

Noting also that the international community can contribute to the creation of conditions which could foster stability and security throughout the pre-election, election and post-election periods in transitional and post-conflict situations,

Reiterating that transparency is a fundamental basis for free and fair elections, which contribute to the accountability of Governments to their citizens, which, in turn, is an underpinning of democratic societies,

Acknowledging, in this regard, the importance of international observation of elections for the promotion of free and fair elections and its contribution to enhancing the integrity of election processes in requesting countries, to promoting public confidence and electoral participation and to mitigating the potential for election-related disturbances,

Acknowledging also that extending invitations regarding international electoral assistance and/or observation is the sovereign right of Member States, and welcoming the decisions of those States that have requested such assistance and/or observation,

Recalling its resolution 60/1 of 16 September 2005, entitled "2005 World Summit Outcome", in which it welcomed the establishment by the Secretary-General of the United Nations Democracy Fund,

Welcoming the support provided by Member States to the electoral assistance activities of the United Nations, inter alia, through the provision of electoral experts, including electoral commission staff, and observers, as well as through contributions to the United Nations Trust Fund for Electoral Assistance, the Democratic Governance Thematic Trust Fund of the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Democracy Fund,

Recognizing that electoral assistance, particularly through appropriate, sustainable, accessible and cost-effective electoral technology, can facilitate full access for persons with disabilities and supports the electoral processes of developing countries,

Recognizing also the coordination challenges posed by the multiplicity of actors involved in electoral assistance both within and outside the United Nations,

Welcoming the contributions made by international and regional organizations and also by non-governmental organizations to enhancing the effectiveness of the principle of periodic and genuine elections and the promotion of democratization,

Recognizing the importance of the links that exist between development, peace, human rights, the rule of law, democracy and good governance, including the holding of free and fair elections, and in this regard welcoming the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,[9]

1. *Welcomes* the report of the Secretary-General;[10]

2. *Commends* the electoral assistance provided upon request to Member States by the United Nations, and requests that such assistance continue on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the evolving needs and legislation of requesting countries to develop, improve and refine their electoral institutions and processes, including ensuring full access to all stages of the elections process for persons with disabilities, recognizing that the responsibility for organizing free and fair elections lies with Governments;

3. *Reaffirms* that the electoral assistance provided by the United Nations should continue to be carried out in an objective, impartial, neutral and independent manner;

4. *Requests* the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, in his role as United Nations focal point for electoral assistance matters, to continue to regularly inform Member States about the requests received and the nature of any assistance provided;

5. *Requests* that the United Nations continue its efforts to ensure, before undertaking to provide electoral assistance to a requesting State, that there is adequate time to organize and carry out an effective mission providing such assistance, including the provision of long-term technical cooperation, that conditions exist to allow a free and fair election and that the results of the mission will be reported comprehensively and consistently;

6. *Notes* the importance of adequate resources for the administration of efficient and transparent elections at the national and local levels, and recommends that Member States provide adequate resources for those elections, including considering the possibility of establishing internal funding, where feasible;

7. *Reaffirms* the obligation of all States to take all appropriate measures to ensure that every citizen has the effective right and opportunity to participate in elections on an equal basis;

8. *Calls upon* all States to ensure that persons with disabilities can effectively and fully participate in political and public life on an equal basis with others, directly or through freely chosen representatives, including the right and opportunity for persons with disabilities to vote and to be elected;

9. *Also calls upon* all States to enhance the political participation of women, accelerate the achievement of equality between men and women and, in all

[9] Resolution 70/1.

[10] A/70/306.

situations, promote and protect the human rights of women with respect to voting in elections and public referendums and being eligible for election to publicly elected bodies on equal terms with men;

10. *Recommends* that, throughout the timespan of the entire electoral cycle, including before and after elections, as appropriate, on the basis of a needs assessment and in accordance with the evolving needs of requesting Member States, bearing in mind sustainability and cost-effectiveness, the United Nations continue to provide technical advice and other assistance to requesting States and electoral institutions in order to help to strengthen their democratic processes, also bearing in mind that the relevant office may provide additional assistance in the form of mediation and good offices, upon the request of Member States;

11. *Notes with appreciation* the additional efforts being made to enhance cooperation with other international, governmental and non-governmental organizations in order to facilitate more comprehensive and needs-specific responses to requests for electoral assistance, encourages those organizations to share knowledge and experience in order to promote best practices in the assistance they provide and in their reporting on electoral processes, and expresses its appreciation to those Member States, regional organizations and non-governmental organizations that have provided observers or technical experts in support of United Nations electoral assistance efforts;

12. *Acknowledges* the aim of harmonizing the methods and standards of the many intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations engaged in observing elections, and in this regard expresses appreciation for the Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation and the Code of Conduct for International Election Observers, which elaborate guidelines for international electoral observation;

13. *Recalls* the establishment by the Secretary-General of the United Nations Trust Fund for Electoral Assistance, and, bearing in mind that the Fund is currently close to depletion, calls upon Member States to consider contributing to the Fund;

14. *Encourages* the Secretary-General, through the United Nations focal point for electoral assistance matters and with the support of the Electoral Assistance Division of the Department of Political Affairs of the Secretariat, to continue to respond to the evolving nature of requests for assistance and the growing need for specific types of medium-term expert assistance aimed at supporting and strengthening the existing capacity of the requesting Government, in particular by enhancing the capacity of national electoral institutions;

15. *Requests* the Secretary-General to provide the Electoral Assistance Division with adequate human and financial resources to allow it to carry out its mandate, including to enhance the accessibility and diversity of the roster of electoral experts and the Organization's electoral institutional memory, and to continue to ensure that the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights is able to respond, within its mandate and in close coordination with the Division, to the numerous and increasingly complex and comprehensive requests from Member States for advisory services;

16. *Reiterates* the need for ongoing comprehensive coordination, under the auspices of the United Nations focal point for electoral assistance matters, between the Electoral Assistance Division, the United Nations Development Programme, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support of the Secretariat and the Office of the High Commissioner to ensure coordination and coherence and avoid duplication of United Nations electoral assistance;

17. *Requests* the United Nations Development Programme to continue its democratic governance assistance programmes in cooperation with other relevant organizations, in particular those that promote the strengthening of democratic institutions and linkages between civil society and Governments;

18. *Reiterates* the role of civil society and the importance of its active engagement in the promotion of democratization, and invites Member States to facilitate the full participation of civil society in electoral processes;

19. *Also reiterates* the importance of reinforced coordination within and outside the United Nations system, and reaffirms the clear leadership role within the United Nations system of the United Nations focal point for electoral assistance matters, including in ensuring system-wide coherence and consistency and in strengthening the institutional memory and the development, dissemination and issuance of United Nations electoral assistance policies;

20. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its seventy-second session on the implementation of the present resolution, in particular on the status of requests from Member States for electoral assistance, and on his efforts to enhance support by the Organization for the democratization process in Member States.

80th plenary meeting
17 December 2015

United Nations A/RES/70/169

General Assembly

Distr.: General
22 February 2016

Seventieth session
Agenda item 72 (*b*)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 17 December 2015

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/70/489/Add.2)*]

70/169. The human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 64/292 of 28 July 2010, in which it recognized the right to safe and clean drinking water and sanitation as a human right that is essential for the full enjoyment of life and all human rights, and 68/157 of 18 December 2013, entitled "The human right to safe drinking water and sanitation",

Reaffirming the previous resolutions of the Human Rights Council regarding the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation, inter alia, Council resolutions 24/18 of 27 September 2013[1] and 27/7 of 25 September 2014,[2]

Recalling the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,[3] the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,[4] the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,[4] the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination,[5] the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,[6] the Convention on the Rights of the Child[7] and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities,[8]

Welcoming the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,[9] including the reaffirmation of commitments regarding the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation therein,

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[1] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 53A* (A/68/53/Add.1), chap. III.

[2] Ibid., *Sixty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 53A* and corrigenda (A/69/53/Add.1 and Corr.1 and 2), chap. IV, sect. A.

[3] Resolution 217 A (III).

[4] See resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

[5] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 660, No. 9464.

[6] Ibid., vol. 1249, No. 20378.

[7] Ibid., vol. 1577, No. 27531.

[8] Ibid., vol. 2515, No. 44910.

[9] Resolution 70/1.

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Recalling the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development of June 1992[10] and its resolution 66/288 of 27 July 2012, entitled "The future we want", and emphasizing the critical importance of water and sanitation within the three dimensions of sustainable development,

Reaffirming its resolutions 58/217 of 23 December 2003, by which it proclaimed the period from 2005 to 2015 the International Decade for Action, "Water for Life", 61/192 of 20 December 2006, by which it established 2008 as the International Year for Sanitation, and 65/153 of 20 December 2010, by which it called upon Member States to support "Sustainable sanitation: the five-year drive to 2015", and recalling its resolution 65/154 of 20 December 2010, by which it declared 2013 the International Year of Water Cooperation,

Recalling the designation of 19 November as World Toilet Day, in the context of Sanitation for All, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 67/291 of 24 July 2013, in which the Assembly encouraged all Member States, as well as the organizations of the United Nations system and international organizations and other stakeholders, to approach the sanitation issue in a much broader context and to encompass all its aspects, including hygiene promotion, the provision of basic sanitation services, sewerage and wastewater treatment and reuse in the context of integrated water management,

Taking note of the relevant commitments and initiatives promoting the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation, including the Panama Declaration, adopted at the third Latin American Sanitation Conference, in 2013, the Kathmandu Declaration, adopted at the fifth South Asian Conference on Sanitation, in 2013, the 2015 Dushanbe Declaration of the High-level International Conference on the Implementation of the International Decade for Action "Water for Life", 2005–2015, the commitments made on the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation at the high-level meeting of the Sanitation and Water for All partnership in 2014 and the Ngor Declaration on Sanitation and Hygiene, adopted at the fourth AfricaSan Conference, in 2015,

Recalling general comment No. 15 (2002) of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights on the right to water (articles 11 and 12 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights) [11] and the statement on the right to sanitation of the Committee of 19 November 2010,[12] as well as the reports of the Special Rapporteur of the Human Rights Council on the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation,

Welcoming the work of the World Health Organization and the United Nations Children's Fund in the 2015 update published by their Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply and Sanitation,[13]

Welcoming also the fact that, according to Joint Monitoring Programme reports of the World Health Organization and the United Nations Children's Fund, the target on safe drinking water of the Millennium Development Goals was formally met,

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[10] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3–14 June 1992*, vol. I, *Resolutions Adopted by the Conference* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex I.

[11] *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2003, Supplement No. 2* (E/2003/22), annex IV.

[12] Ibid., *2011, Supplement No. 2* (E/2011/22), annex VI.

[13] World Health Organization/United Nations Children's Fund, *Progress on Sanitation and Drinking Water*, Geneva, 2015.

while being deeply concerned, however, that, according to the 2015 Joint Monitoring Programme update, 663 million people still lack access to improved drinking water sources and that 8 out of 10 people still without improved drinking water sources live in rural areas,

Deeply concerned that the world missed the sanitation component of Millennium Development Goal 7 by almost 700 million people and that more than 2.4 billion people still do not have access to improved sanitation facilities, including more than 946 million people who still practise open defecation, which is one of the clearest manifestations of poverty and extreme poverty,

Deeply concerned also that women and girls often face particular barriers in accessing water and sanitation and that they shoulder the main burden of collecting household water in many parts of the world, restricting their time for other activities, such as education and leisure, or for women earning a livelihood,

Deeply concerned further that the lack of access to adequate water and sanitation services, including for menstrual hygiene management, especially in schools, contributes to reinforcing the widespread stigma associated with menstruation, negatively affecting gender equality and women's and girls' enjoyment of human rights, including the right to education,

Deeply concerned that women and girls are particularly at risk and exposed to attacks, sexual and gender-based violence, harassment and other threats to their safety while collecting household water and when accessing sanitation facilities outside of their homes or practising open defecation,

Deeply alarmed that, every year, almost 700,000 children under 5 years of age die as a result of water and sanitation-related diseases, and underscoring that progress on reducing child mortality, morbidity and stunting is linked to children's and women's access to safe drinking water and sanitation,

Deeply concerned that official figures do not fully capture the dimensions of drinking water availability, safety, affordability of services and safe management of excreta and wastewater, as well as of inequality and discrimination in the access to safe drinking water and sanitation and therefore underestimate the numbers of those without access to safe and affordable drinking water and safely managed and affordable sanitation, and highlighting in this context the need to adequately monitor the safety of drinking water and sanitation in order to obtain data that capture those dimensions,

Deeply concerned also that inexistent or inadequate sanitation facilities as well as serious deficiencies in water management and wastewater treatment can negatively affect water provision and sustainable access to safe drinking water, and recognizing that, in progressively realizing the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation as well as other human rights, States should increasingly pursue integrated approaches and strengthen their water resource management, including by improving their wastewater treatment and by preventing and reducing surface and groundwater pollution,

Affirming the importance of regional and international technical cooperation, where appropriate, as a means to promote the progressive realization of the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation, without any prejudice to questions of international water law, including international watercourse law,

Reaffirming the responsibility of States to ensure the promotion and protection of all human rights, which are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated,

and must be treated globally, in a fair and equal manner, on the same footing and with the same emphasis,

Recalling the understanding by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Special Rapporteur on the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation that the rights to safe drinking water and sanitation are closely related, but have distinct features which warrant their separate treatment in order to address specific challenges in their implementation and that sanitation too often remains neglected if not addressed as a separate right, while being a component of the right to an adequate standard of living,

Recalling also that the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation are derived from the right to an adequate standard of living and are inextricably related to the right to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, as well as to the right to life and human dignity,

Acknowledging the importance of equal access to safe drinking water and sanitation as an integral component of the realization of all human rights,

1. *Affirms* that the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation as components of the right to an adequate standard of living are essential for the full enjoyment of the right to life and all human rights;

2. *Recognizes* that the human right to safe drinking water entitles everyone, without discrimination, to have access to sufficient, safe, acceptable, physically accessible and affordable water for personal and domestic use, and that the human right to sanitation entitles everyone, without discrimination, to have physical and affordable access to sanitation, in all spheres of life, that is safe, hygienic, secure, socially and culturally acceptable and that provides privacy and ensures dignity, while reaffirming that both rights are components of the right to an adequate standard of living;

3. *Welcomes* Goal 6 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,[9] on ensuring the availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all, which includes important dimensions related to the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation;

4. *Also welcomes* the work of the Special Rapporteur of the Human Rights Council on the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation, and takes note with appreciation, in particular, of his first reports on affordability of water and sanitation services[14] and on the analysis of the different types of water and sanitation services from the perspective of the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation;[15]

5. *Calls upon* States:

(*a*) To ensure the progressive realization of the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation for all in a non-discriminatory manner while eliminating inequalities in access, including for individuals belonging to groups at risk and to marginalized groups, on the grounds of race, gender, age, disability, ethnicity, culture, religion and national or social origin or on any other grounds, with a view to progressively eliminating inequalities based on factors such as rural-urban disparities, residence in a slum, income levels and other relevant considerations;

[14] A/HRC/30/39.

[15] A/70/203.

(*b*) To give due consideration to the commitments regarding the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation when implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including through the full implementation of Goal 6;

(*c*) To continuously monitor and regularly analyse the status of the realization of the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation;

(*d*) To identify patterns of failure to respect, protect or fulfil the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation for all persons without discrimination and to address their structural causes in policymaking and budgeting within a broader framework, while undertaking holistic planning aimed at achieving sustainable universal access, including in instances where the private sector, donors and non-governmental organizations are involved in service provision;

(*e*) To promote both women's leadership and their full, effective and equal participation in decision-making on water and sanitation management and to ensure that a gender-based approach is adopted in relation to water and sanitation programmes, including measures, inter alia, to reduce the time spent by women and girls in collecting household water, in order to address the negative impact of inadequate water and sanitation services on the access of girls to education and to protect women and girls from being physically threatened or assaulted, including from sexual violence, while collecting household water and when accessing sanitation facilities outside of their home or practising open defecation;

(*f*) To progressively eliminate open defecation by adopting policies to increase access to sanitation, including for individuals belonging to vulnerable and marginalized groups;

(*g*) To approach the sanitation issue in a much broader context, taking into account the need to pursue integrated approaches;

(*h*) To consult and coordinate with local communities and other stakeholders, including civil society and the private sector, on adequate solutions to ensure sustainable access to safe drinking water and sanitation;

(*i*) To provide for effective accountability mechanisms for all water and sanitation service providers to ensure that they respect human rights and do not cause human rights violations or abuses;

6. *Calls upon* non-State actors, including business enterprises, both transnational and others, to comply with their responsibility to respect human rights, including the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation, including by cooperating with State investigations into allegations of abuses of the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation, and by progressively engaging with States to detect and remedy abuses of the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation;

7. *Invites* regional and international organizations to complement efforts by States to progressively realize the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation;

8. *Calls upon* Member States to enhance global partnerships for sustainable development as a means to achieve and sustain the Goal and the targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and highlights the need to develop adequate follow-up and review of progress on the 2030 Agenda, including on ensuring availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all;

9. *Reaffirms* that States have the primary responsibility to ensure the full realization of all human rights and to endeavour to take steps, individually and through international assistance and cooperation, especially economic and technical

cooperation, to the maximum of their available resources, with a view to progressively achieving the full realization of the rights to safe drinking water and sanitation by all appropriate means, including, in particular, the adoption of legislative measures;

10. *Stresses* the important role of the international cooperation and technical assistance provided by States, specialized agencies of the United Nations system and international and development partners, as well as by donor agencies, and urges development partners to adopt a human rights-based approach when designing and implementing development programmes in support of national initiatives and plans of action related to the rights to safe drinking water and sanitation;

11. *Decides* to continue its consideration of the question at its seventy-second session.

80th plenary meeting
17 December 2015

General Assembly

Distr.: General
10 February 2016

Seventieth session
Agenda item 72 (*b*)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 17 December 2015

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/70/489/Add.2)*]

70/170. Towards the full realization of an inclusive and accessible United Nations for persons with disabilities

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities,[1] which it adopted on 13 December 2006 and which entered into force on 3 May 2008, a landmark convention affirming the human rights and fundamental freedoms of persons with disabilities, and recognizing that it is both a human rights and a development instrument,

Recalling its resolution 67/160 of 20 December 2012, in which it requested the Secretary-General to take further actions to promote the rights of persons with disabilities in the United Nations system in accordance with the Convention, including the retention and recruitment of persons with disabilities,

Recalling also its previous relevant resolutions, in which it requested the Secretary-General to continue to improve full inclusion of persons with disabilities and continue the progressive implementation of standards and guidelines with respect to the accessibility of facilities and services of the United Nations system, taking into account the relevant provisions of the Convention,

Noting with appreciation the efforts of the Secretary-General in this regard, including the opening of the accessibility centres at the United Nations offices in New York and Bangkok,

Noting that improvement in accessibility has been a core goal of the capital master plan since the commencement of the renovation of United Nations Headquarters, and recalling its resolution 69/250 of 29 December 2014, in which it requested the Secretary-General to continue to address issues related to the accessibility of conference facilities as a matter of priority and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its seventieth session,

Noting also that the Secretariat-wide Inter-Departmental Task Force on Accessibility has contributed to promoting inclusive and accessible built environments, facilities, human resources, conferences and services at all United Nations premises,

[1] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2515, No. 44910.

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1. *Affirms* that the United Nations has an important role to play in protecting and promoting the rights of persons with disabilities, including by taking all appropriate measures to ensure that it provides accessibility and reasonable accommodation, bearing in mind that, in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities,[1] reasonable accommodation is defined as necessary and appropriate modification and adjustments not imposing a disproportionate or undue burden, where needed in a particular case, to ensure to persons with disabilities the enjoyment or exercise on an equal basis with others of all human rights and fundamental freedoms;

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to raise awareness about protecting and promoting the rights of persons with disabilities and to improve relevant regulations, facilities and services within the United Nations system, including its agencies, funds and programmes, and regional offices to create non-discriminatory and accessible environments for persons with disabilities, including staff members, delegates and visitors with disabilities, bearing in mind the full range of disabilities as defined in article 1 of the Convention, and encourages Member States to support the Secretary-General in this regard;

3. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to further promote awareness and understanding among United Nations staff members towards persons with disabilities, including recognition of their full potential and their contribution to the work of the United Nations;

4. *Further requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-first session a comprehensive report, to be prepared from within existing resources, on:

(*a*) The status and application of existing regulations relating to reasonable accommodation and the status of facilities and services relating thereto and areas that need improvement to ensure full accessibility, following universal design, and reasonable accommodation within the United Nations system, including its agencies, funds and programmes, and regional offices;

(*b*) Best practices and views of Member States, other international organizations and other relevant stakeholders, including the Special Rapporteur of the Human Rights Council on the rights of persons with disabilities, the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, disabled persons' organizations and United Nations staff members with disabilities, on the provision of accessibility, following universal design, and reasonable accommodation;

(*c*) Recommendations on how to better coordinate, facilitate and monitor practical accessibility measures in order to provide reasonable accommodation, in a cost-effective manner, to meet the needs of persons with disabilities for their participation in meetings, conferences and services at United Nations premises.

80th plenary meeting
17 December 2015

General Assembly

Distr.: General
17 February 2016

Seventieth session
Agenda item 72 (*b*)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 17 December 2015

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/70/489/Add.2)*]

70/171. United Nations Human Rights Training and Documentation Centre for South-West Asia and the Arab Region

The General Assembly,

Guided by the fundamental and universal principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,[1]

Recalling the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action of 1993,[2] which reiterated the need to consider the possibility of establishing regional and subregional arrangements for the promotion and protection of human rights where they do not already exist,

Recalling also its resolutions 32/127 of 16 December 1977 and 51/102 of 12 December 1996 and all its subsequent resolutions concerning regional arrangements for the promotion and protection of human rights,

Recalling further its resolutions 60/153 of 16 December 2005, 67/162 of 20 December 2012, 68/241 of 27 December 2013 and 69/171 of 18 December 2014 on the United Nations Human Rights Training and Documentation Centre for South-West Asia and the Arab Region,

Recalling Commission on Human Rights resolution 1993/51 of 9 March 1993[3] and all its subsequent resolutions concerning regional arrangements for the promotion and protection of human rights,

Reaffirming that regional cooperation plays a fundamental role in promoting and protecting human rights and should reinforce universal human rights, as contained in international human rights instruments, and their protection,

Noting that the developments in the Middle East and North Africa have continued to generate growing demand for the services of the Centre, and recognizing that the report of the Secretary-General[4] indicates that regular budget resources have

[1] Resolution 217 A (III).

[2] A/CONF.157/24 (Part I), chap. III.

[3] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1993, Supplement No. 3* and corrigenda (E/1993/23 and Corr.2, 4 and 5), chap. II, sect. A.

[4] A/70/414.

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been allocated to reinforce the staffing capacity of the Centre, thereby enabling it to better respond to training and documentation demands in a more timely and adequate manner, and to help to fill the gaps in terms of expertise and relevant Arabic-language training materials,

Mindful of the vastness and the diversity of the needs in the field of human rights within South-West Asia and the Arab region, and taking into account the need for appropriate and sustainable funding of the Centre to fully realize its significant function and crucial role in the region,

1. *Welcomes* the report of the Secretary-General;[4]

2. *Notes with appreciation* the successful assistance that the United Nations Human Rights Training and Documentation Centre for South-West Asia and the Arab Region has provided through human rights capacity-building activities, technical assistance programmes and training programmes on combating human trafficking, human rights and media, human rights and diplomacy, human rights education and police training on human rights, as well as support to national human rights institutions and regional consultations on the topics of United Nations human rights mechanisms;

3. *Underlines* the Centre's role as a source for regional expertise and the need to meet an increasing number of requests for training and documentation, including in the Arabic language;

4. *Notes* that the increasing demand that has been placed on the Centre by Member States and other stakeholders reveals a growing recognition of its role and impact on strengthening human rights capacities in the region;

5. *Encourages* the continued engagement of the Centre to work with other United Nations regional offices to strengthen its work and to avoid duplication;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-second session a report, in accordance with existing rules and procedures, on the implementation of the present resolution.

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